

ALASKA LEGISLATURE COMMITTEE FILES 1997-1998 8672

9533 SENATE HEALTH EDUCATION & SOCIAL SERVICES

170

Let me tell you as a parent that you will likely hear the mantra that, "of course we teach phonics", so there is no reason to create legislation like SB 203. Most of us do not know what the research based, explicit systematic phonics instruction includes.

The reality is that many teachers, to no fault of their own, don't know, and were never taught how to teach an Explicit Systematic Phonics program that is researched based. Too often, single letter and dual letter blend sounds are the extent of the phonics instruction. I don't know how many frustrated parents have come to me with their child's paper filled with mis-spelled words. These same parents are often told that the mis-spelled words like -w-o-k- for walk, and -l-i-t- for light are evidence that they know their phonics. This level of phonics is not sufficient.

In fact Dr. Carmine states that, "when teachers say they are using phonics, it may not be the careful, systematic use of phonics as indicated in the research, so they're not going to get the benefit of actually using the research based phonics."

He further states that, "the NIH research has proven quite clearly that most students will not learn to read naturally by merely immersing them in a 'print rich environment'. It is not true that good readers use pictures and context, or skipping and guessing, to decode words." "...those are strategies of individuals who cannot read well, but in fact, whole language, is teaching the strategies that characterize disabled readers."

What has been done to train teachers in reading in many states was just the opposite of research. If you are spending precious State money to train teachers to do the wrong thing, you've got a problem.

We need to decide what research we are going to believe, and whether an agreement can be made that any training, and instructional material dollars, will be used in a consistent manner to get all kids to read which follows that research. We should learn from the mistakes of other states like California who has 5 out of 6 approved reading programs that do not follow the research.

We must also be aware of conflicts of interest. Dr Carnine brings out the fact that the leaders of the two national research organizations in reading are also authors of the programs that do not follow the research.

This bill is the first step. You will have to bring experts, well versed in this research, to train the current educators and test their proficiency.

With a system that is faced with today's transient population, continuity of education is even more important. One teacher teaching correctly, out of six that the student will have does not follow the research and will not provide the results.

You will also hear that many use an eclectic approach that is customized to the students learning style and developmental level. I have yet to have any evidence that this works, or that it is actually being done. I have asked the following with no result: What learning style is being used to teach my children and how was that determined? Show me the developmental continuum and where my children are on that continuum, and explain how that was determined? What usually is occurring is that a little bit of everything, via a shotgun approach, is being given to all the children without any true regard for the rhetoric being expounded. A quick look at the student's spelling will reveal a lot about what is going on in the classroom.

We cannot have ideology, or comfort levels, surpassing the needs of students. When you have strong research, and the kids have strong needs, we cannot go through process gyrations for another 10 years to get everyone to buy in. It is time to lead! We need to become knowledgeable on the valid research, educate the public and the teachers, train the teachers in explicit phonics instruction that follows the research, and provide early & frequent testing and intervention.

Most parents are young and battling to maintain a household, and raise their kids. They do not have the time, nor should they be forced to take the time away from their kids, to bird dog a system, to ensure that their kids can learn to read. Many will try to fill the gaps the system creates, but, unless it is part of the educational system you will have minimal success. With 5 kids we have seen the patterns and pitfalls of the system. Allowing kids to do things incorrectly just creates neurological engrams that are difficult if not

impossible to change without a disciplined conscious effort.

I would ask that you think of the rhetoric that parents are up against as you listen to any opposition to this bill. I would ask that you give every child the opportunity to read, and pass this legislation.

With all the research supporting this bill; With the Learning First Alliance of 12 National Educational Organizations including the NEA and AFT supporting researched based instruction; I am sure that the Alaska Department of Education will work with this legislature to insure that our Alaskan children will "learn to read", so that they can "read to learn", and make Alaska the best in the Nation.

Thank you,
I would be glad to answer any questions you may have.

For Reference:

Learning First Alliance 1001 Connecticut Ave. NW Suite 310, Washington D.C. 20036
(202) 822-8403 x 40 <http://www.learningfirst.org>

American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education
American Association of School Administrators
American Federation of Teachers
Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development
Council of Chief State School Officers
Education Commission of the States
National School Board Association
National PTA
National Education Association
National Association of State Boards of Education
National Association of Elementary School Principals
National Association of Secondary School Principals

Monday, February 23, 1998

Senator Wilkins and Senate WESS Committee:

We wish to respond to SB 203 as proposed.

1. requiring districts to include intensive systematic phonics and spelling instruction in the curriculum for k-6 is
 - a. an infringement on local control of schools. Who has given the legislature the power to legislate curriculum in our schools??
 - b. Also, this requirement implies that phonics and spelling instruction is not already occurring in our elementary schools. That is simply not true.

2. requiring all students in K-3 to pass a nationally normed group administered test in basic reading and reading comprehension.
 - a. students are already being tested by the state on the CAT, the Alaska State Writing Assessment, and now the Quality Schools Initiative. This proposal would take more instructional time for testing.
 - b. What is 'passing' on a nationally normed test??
 - c. How will we support and insure student success with this endeavor?
 - d. What will happen to students who don't "pass"?

3. requiring a hiring preference for elementary teachers who have completed a course in the language basis of reading.
 - a. What does this mean? Any reputable course offered in reading instruction today will be inclusive of all methodologies and will integrate phonics into the development of spelling and reading skills. Any qualified teacher today is doing just that.

We strongly oppose this bill. It usurps local control of schools and is one more step toward state mandated educational practices. As educators, we find this movement very counter-productive and it tends to further load an already overloaded educational bureaucracy.

Karen Ekeo - 636 Main St. Ketchikan
Jane Vollmer P.O. Box 6011 " "
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Barbara Star
P.O. Box 23570
Ketchikan, AK 99901

Charles R. Nelson Box 23305 Ketchikan
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Miss... K... 5646 S. Tomass Hwy Ktn. AK 99901

The Hess Committee
Alaska State Capitol
Juneau, AK 99801-1181

February 20, 1998

Dear Legislators,

I, as a working Reading Teacher, a parent of two school aged children and as a student seeking an advanced degree, strongly urge you not to pass Senate Bill 203.

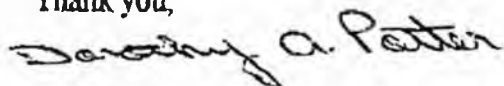
I do agree that phonics is an important aspect of learning to read and we use it everyday in nearly every grade and class but there are other equally important components as well. The wording in your bill seems to leave out the other components.

The excellent teachers in the state of Alaska work very hard to make successful learners of our students, please do not tie their hands with proposals that are in this bill, please do not follow the unvalidated waves of public opinion and sentiment, please ask for help in research of the latest and best practices in teaching reading. Current research clearly shows that not all students learn the same way and today's best teachers are already searching for and implementing the methods that work for each student.

We, as professionals, parents and students of education, appreciate the legislature's help and support. We hope we can count on your continued support to let our well educated and experienced teaching professionals provide top quality education to each and every child in what ever method that best suites the learning styles and education needs of each individual child.

Once again, please do not allow legislation to pass that will hinder the ability of our teachers to teach or the ability of our children to learn. VOTE NO ON SENATE BILL 203!

Thank you,



Dorothy A. Potter
P.O. Box 211
Chevak, AK 99463

cc:Mail for: Sheila Peterson

Subject: Re: SB203
From: Senator Gary Wilken 2/28/98 6:54 AM
To: msanders@kpbsd.k12.ak.us at CC2MHS1
cc: Sheila Peterson

Dear Ms. Sanders:

Thanks you for your note on SB 203. The bill has created quite a stir during our testimony.

We will continue to work on it in the Senate HESS to make it more acceptable to all.

Gary Wilken
Senator - West Fairbanks
Chairman - Senate HESS

Reply Separator

Subject: SB203
Author: msanders@kpbsd.k12.ak.us at CC2MHS1
Date: 2/26/98 7:37 AM

I am writing to express my extreme concern over SB203. This legislation strikes me as a being a band-aid measure for a critical incident. One that will give the token appearance of addressing an issue in need of the highest quality efforts. I have been an Alaskan educator for 20 years and I have witnessed the sound basis for the concern that generated this attempt at legislation. It is true that effective models for high quality reading instruction are not as widespread or comprehensive as our students require.

It is also true that this situation needs to be rectified by the highest quality staff development at the school district and university level. However, the approach suggested in SB203 is one that represents only a partial understanding of the reading process, one that will allow some to believe the problem is being addressed while creating a funding and programmatic nightmare for those of us who will be forced to implement this legislation.

I urge you to drop this legislation in favor of creating a task force of the best reading educators in the state and/or nation as well as individuals with an understanding of the diverse nature of the Alaskan population and the unique learning needs of our students.

Sincerely,

Mo Sanders
Title 1 and Migrant Coordinator

Kenai Peninsula Borough School District
907-262-9137

Bethanie R. DeGayner
Box 2032
Petersburg, AK 99833
Email: degayner@alaska.net
February 23, 1998

TO: Health, Education and Social Services Committee

President Gary Wilken

RE: SB 203 Literacy Restoration Act

Dear Legislators,

I am writing to voice my opposition to SB 203, which I believe is based on erroneous assumptions about how children learn, and how good teachers teach. I am a preschool teacher and a mother of three avid readers. I have long been a classroom volunteer and have seen public school instructional practices firsthand.

Classroom teachers are already constantly teaching phonics, but not as an isolated subject in and of itself. Letters, and the sounds they make, are taught as children engage in literacy activities which have personal meaning to them. Teachers and children write lists, letters, stories, and thank-you notes. They read books, instructions, lunch menus and signs. Through these various activities, children learn more than letters and sounds. They learn the power, the relevance and the joy of the printed word. Knowing phonics is certainly a useful tool, and teachers strive to make sure each child acquires that as part of their mental "tool kit". However, it's wrong to assume that phonics is the only tool, or even the primary tool children use as they grow in literacy.

For a long time, phonics was over-emphasized in schools, and the U.S. has a deplorably high rate of adult illiteracy to show for it. Over thirty years of research lead us to conclude that children do not learn active skills in a part-to whole fashion. Children become skilled at writing and reading the way they became skilled at talking - by doing it. Children compare their efforts with the language they see and hear around them, and make adjustments. As their perception and abilities develop, their speech, their reading, their writing better approximates the standard.

The statement in the bill that "English is a phonetic language" is simply absurd. Of the fifty most commonly used words in the English language, about one-half of them are not phonetic. Consider the following statement, which I constructed out of short, common words:

Once they said, "Who loves you most?"

Can you find a phonetic word in it? Using phonics alone would lead me to write it:

Wuns thay sed, "Hoo luvs you moast?"

Surely (after phonetic misfit), you must concede that phonics alone cannot guide our children to a full understanding of this very complex language!

Lastly, I believe it's inappropriate for legislators to be mandating teacher practice. Teachers are trained to be experts in children's development and learning. Parents are experts about their own children. Together, they can decide how best to teach the children.

Sincerely
Bethanie R. DeGayner



printed
3/12/98

Author: lthomas@astrolabe.com (Lynn Thomas) at CC2MHS1

I have some major concerns with Bill #203, they are: using standardized/norm referenced tests are inappropriate for first through third grade students. The tests are not made to be a diagnostic test and again are developmentally inappropriate for the early grades. These tests are unreliable at best; the Alaska State Legislature should not be mandating (especially without appropriate funding attached) curriculum. This is a function of the local school boards/districts. Where has the local control gone in this bill? Please do not let this bill out of committee. Thank you for your time.

Author: jfmct@acad1.alaska.edu at CC2MHS1
To: Senator Gary Wilken

From: Dr. Mary-Claire Tarlow
University of Alaska, Southeast

Subject: SJR 39 and SB 203

I am unable to come testify on SJR 39 this Monday morning, but I am concerned about its content for many of the same reasons I gave in my testimony on SB 203.

I have contacted the office of the NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR TEACHERS OF ENGLISH, which is the professional organization for teachers of reading and writing from kindergarten through college. This association must represent a huge number of literacy educators, and therefore must reflect a balanced, validated view of what is known in the field. For this reason, the statements they produce should be given great weight.

I have received from them some resolutions specifically related to the Reading Excellence Act, and will bring that information by your office on Monday morning.

They also sent me an article that critiques the research of the NICHD, which both the Reading Excellence Act and SB 203 are largely based on. I will include this in my packet of information.

I hope you will seriously consider this information. IT IS CRUCIAL TO THE FUTURE OF THOUSANDS OF CHILDREN, and to their effect on society, as I know you are aware.

Lastly, I want to point out that if we don't treat our teachers like professionals, we will weaken their desire to act like professionals. This is a downward spiraling trend. Please help us to stop this trend now. DEFEAT BOTH SJR 39 AND SB 203.

Thanks,

Dr. Mary-Claire Tarlow
Director of Elementary Education
University of Alaska Southeast

(N)

Feb. 20, 1998

Hess Committee
Alaska State Capital
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1180

SP
P. Steiner
w/cur
(203)

This letter is in response to Senate Bill No. 203; Literacy Restoration Act:

"An Act requiring that phonics be taught in kindergarten through third grades in the public school system; phonics meaning the direct teaching of preplanned sequence of relationships between speech sounds and all their letter equivalents, instruction in blending or sounding out two or more letter groups, and practice with reading material that includes letters and letter groups that are explicitly taught."

Traditionally, it has been assumed that a student needs mastery of phonics to learn how to read. A large amount of time is still spent in many classrooms teaching **phonics**. There are so many rules that no one, not even the most fluent reader, can possibly articulate them all. In the English language there are more exceptions to the rules of sound-symbol correspondence than there are regularities.

The most successful way to learn to read is by reading language that is composed naturally. The act of reading is an interaction among three cueing systems - semantic, syntactic, and grapho-phonetic; operating simultaneously in a social or situational context. Phonics is believed to be best learned in a meaningful context.

Indeed, the letters occurring in the first part of a word are important. The first letter of a word, usually a consonant, triggers the reader to bring together the other cueing systems and to make meaning. When he encounters an unknown word he needs to look at the pictures, think about the story, ask himself what would make sense, and use the first letters of the word as a **springboard** to the meaning. The act of reading is far more complex than simply sounding out letters. To call it decoding is to describe it inaccurately. It is an act of construction; of building meanings. This brings one inevitably to the rejection of methods that attempt to only

teach parts of words and words out of context. Rather, phonics is believed to be best learned in a meaningful context.

The most successful way to learn to read is by reading language that is composed naturally. A child's first reading book must make sense and offer as much contextual and syntactic support as possible. Even a fluent reader stumbles and miscues his way through print that has no virtue beyond its phonic regularity. Try reading this preprimer example:

Pam ran up the ramp.

Up the ramp ran the pup.

The pup and Pam nap.

The model of language acquisition upon which this is based supposes that language can be learned from its component parts to its meaningful whole, rather like adding more and more bricks to a wall until the building is finished. It supposes that a child needs to master by memory and practice many small items of linguistic information. He is presented with the sounds of the letters, out of context, and for no purpose outside the reading exercise. Letters build into words; words build into sentences. Naturally such exercises are made easier for the student if they start with simple sounds and easy words. Hence, the creation of the preprimer with its litany of short vowel sounds and the ludicrous antics of Pam and her pup. Such text not only lacks interest, it is devoid of intelligence. Phonics is believed to be best learned in a meaningful context.

The most successful way to learn to read is by reading language that is composed naturally. Books in which the language is predictable both semantically and syntactically offer the maximum support to a beginning reader. Examine the opening lines of E. Carle's The Very Hungry Caterpillar:

In the light of the moon a little egg lay on a leaf.

One Sunday morning the warm sun came up and -
pop! - out of the egg came a very small and very
hungry caterpillar. He started to look for some

food . . .

The picture of the moon, the egg, and the leaf provides a context in which to set the story and so assist the child's initial attempts to read the words. The logic of the story also provides an internal context. What else would a hungry caterpillar do except start to look for food? The story as it unfolds provides the motivation to read; the rhythm of the language

supports the reader and offers confirmation of expectations. The experience of reading this book does not compare with Pam and her pup.

If a child learns about language at home through interaction with adults who do real things with language in everyday contexts, then it is clearly nonsense for schools to try to teach about language in contexts which lack purpose and with texts that are unnaturally constructed. Hence, phonics is believed to be best learned in a meaningful context.

As an Early Childhood Education student at U.A.S., I urge your careful reconsideration of a bill requiring direct instruction of phonics to be taught explicitly in the classroom.

Sincerely,

Corinne Colley

cc:Mail for: mel krogseng

Subject: Schools told how to teach reading
From: family@ptialaska.net at CC2MHS1 3/21/98 12:29 AM
bcc: Mel Krogseng at LAA_STAY
To: family@ptialaska.net at CC2MHS1

It looks like England has looked at the research on reading and taken action. I encourage Alaska to do the same. Support Alaska's SB 203. I prefer the CSSB 203 version that was worked on versus the testing only version in SSSB 203.

The HTML version of this article is at the end of the cut and pasted version that immediately follows.
Dr Bill Pfeifer

London Telegraph

News	UK	Electronic
Telegraph	Friday 20 March	
1998		Issue 1029

Schools told how to teach reading
By Liz Lightfoot, Education Correspondent

THE most fundamental change in primary education since the introduction of the national curriculum begins today as the Government sends out the first countrywide policy on the teaching of reading to 18,500 schools.

All primaries will be required to return to the traditional, structured teaching of phonics, and to abandon the present system by which children are largely expected to learn by reading story books to their teachers.

Most schools will have to re-think their methods and parents, who are being encouraged by the Government to "police" the changes, should be able to see the difference quickly.

The 91-page National Literacy Strategy represents an unprecedented intervention in classroom teaching methods by ministers. David Blunkett, the Education Secretary, describes the new framework as "a practical tool to help teachers" and "a reference point for day-to-day teaching".

The policy requires teachers to bring back daily, hour-long English lessons, in which pupils are taught for two-thirds of the time as a whole class, reading together, extending their vocabulary and being taught punctuation, grammar and spelling.

For the other third they will work in ability groups, but even then the teacher will work with one group giving direct instruction while the rest are encouraged to work independently.

Ofsted inspectors will monitor the implementation of the strategy as they visit schools. Only those schools with exceptional English test results will be exempted from the requirement.

Ministers have gone ahead with publishing the strategy in the face of opposition from some leading politicians should not interfere so directly in teaching methods and warn that, if the advice turns out to be flawed, standards nationally would plummet.

Chris Woodhead, the Chief Inspector of Schools, has backed the strategy, but the Government's curriculum advisers at the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority complained that listening and speaking skills were not included in the hour.

Mr Blunkett, however, believes that interactive, whole class teaching will do far more to encourage children to listen and speak out than the present system of pupils sitting in groups and working individually, usually on worksheets.

The document points out that when children work individually, as they do in most lessons, the average time they are directly taught by the teacher is just five or six minutes a week.

Although most schools claim to teach phonics as part of a "mixture of methods", in reality it is mostly confined in the early stages to teaching the sounds of the alphabet so that children can identify the first letters in words.

Under the present system, children are encouraged to guess what words say using the context of the story, or picture clues, and then to commit them to memory by shape. Where more structured phonics is taught, it is usually later on, for spelling purposes.

The new strategy insists that phonics comes first. Teachers, it says, have been over-cautious about the teaching of phonics. It states: "Research evidence shows that pupils do not learn to distinguish between the different sounds of words simply by being exposed to books. They need to be taught to do this.

"When they begin to read, most pupils tend to see words as images, with a particular shape and pattern. They tend not to understand that words are made up of letters used in particular combinations that correspond with spoken sounds. It is essential that pupils are taught these basic de-coding and spelling skills from the outset."

In a direct attack on current teaching methods it says that when pupils read familiar and predictable texts they become over-reliant on guessing context.

The Government has provided funds for in-service teacher training because the vast majority of teachers have not been told how to teach phonics.

Since the 1970s many teacher training colleges have shunned what they see as "sterile de-coding" and told students to concentrate on "reading for meaning".

But in September 1990 Martin Turner, an educational psychologist, revealed that reading tests administered to 400,000 seven-year-olds showed the biggest decline in standards for 45 years. Other psychologists backed up his claim that a high proportion of children referred to them with reading difficulties were not dyslexic but had been badly taught by the new methods.

The Government said research in English-speaking countries has proved that structured phonics is the most effective way to teach. The new methods are also believed to have contributed to the under-achievement of boys in reading compared with girls. Where intensive phonics are used, boys achieve as well as, or better than, girls.

Sue Lloyd, who developed the "Jolly Phonic" scheme at Woods Loke School in Lowestoft, Norfolk, where boys do as well as girls, welcomed the strategy but said its authors appeared to have under-estimated the speed at which children could pick up letter-sound combinations. She said: "It is a step in the right direction, but in practice I think most teachers will find it better to move more quickly instead of leaving common phonemes such as 'oo' and 'ee' until a child has been in school for four terms or more."

Anne Barnes, the general secretary of the National Association for the Teaching of English, said teachers would have to adapt the strategy because children learnt to read in different ways. "Phonics is very difficult to teach and if it is done badly children will hate it and be discouraged from reading."

Other articles:

7 February 1998: Making sound sense of reading
5 January 1998: Boys are left behind by modern teaching
23 December 1997: Consultants spearhead classroom return to 3Rs
15 September 1997: Teachers to be re-trained over literacy
8 March 1997: Sometimes it's best to be old-fashioned
16 May 1996: In My View: C-a-t: sounding it all out is the only way to teach them
<http://www.telegraph.co.uk:80/et?ac=000761589537648&rtmo=3xr3w3KM&atmo=3xr3w3KM&pg=/et/98/3/20/nread20.html>

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

INTERACTIVE EDITION

EDITORIAL

March 23, 1998

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REVIEW & OUTLOOK

Spelling Disaster

Sinking scores, frustrated teachers, schools divided, too many kids holding books the wrong side up. In recent years, the process of teaching young children to read has been such a notable disaster throughout the country, there was bound to be a backlash. It has finally arrived in a big way.

For starters, there is last week's "Preventing Reading Difficulties in Young Children," a report released by the National Research Council in language so careful and soothing it almost whispers. But in it, finally, are some sensible suggestions on reforming and expanding the theories and methods that are plainly ill-equipped to acquaint primary graders with the ABCs of reading. These are the kinds of kids who will wander on out into the job market 10 years later, if they last that long, spelling "way" and "weigh" the same way while using it mostly as a modifier for cool. Presuming they are literate at all.





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**ANDERSEN
CONSULTING**

The reasons so many children fail in their struggle to master reading skills are part of a complex patchwork that sociologists and educators will forever pick apart. But it's getting pretty clear that the old-fashioned "phonics" approach probably got Spot moving a lot quicker than the newfangled "whole" language method. In phonics, kids learn to sound out each word and endure flash card drills. In whole language, the word is viewed in its contextual setting--consider it a landscape through which a child's imagination drifts free as a bird, unshackled by the annoying specifics of grammar and spelling.

Which system to use has become an absurdly divisive issue, reaching out of Crayolaland into the realms of politics and ideology. It will not surprise anyone that the phonics people are more predictably conservative, while left-wing nuts love whole language. Therefore California was a pioneer in whole language, going whole hog back in 1987. By 1995, the state tied Louisiana for the worst reading scores in the country. Stunned, the legislature reversed course, passing an "ABC" law that mandated the return of phonics-based instruction.

That seems to be a trend. Increasingly, elementary school teachers seeking certification are required to be proficient in phonics. In Washington state come the millennium, all new elementary school teachers will have to pass a reading-instruction exam administered by the State Board of Education. New York's Family Academy, an experimental public school, managed to quadruple its test scores in a single year by returning to traditional methods.

The report just released by the National Research Council (sponsored by the Department of Education and the Department of Health and Human Services) concludes that no single method has all the answers, and recommends a mix of the two. Well, that's a start. So is the report's recognition that the debate over methods has diverted too much attention from the problem of actually getting kids to read.

For proof, there are the embarrassing statistics: A 1992 National Adult Literacy Survey showed that 21% of Americans are functionally illiterate. On top of that, a December study by the Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development found the United States to be among the few developed nations that has failed to improve literacy over the past generation.

Courageously, former whole language supporters like the American Federation of Teachers and the International Reading Association have acknowledged that their faith was misplaced. A \$200 million, 30-year study by the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, a branch of the NIH, has likewise confirmed the detriments of whole language. Left over in a corner is the National Education Association, a powerhouse constituency of the Democratic Party. While a spokesperson claimed last Friday that the NEA supports the National Research Council's call for a diverse approach, it just promoted whole language dogma at a Read Across America day this month.

— should we?

Somehow reading shouldn't have ended up being an ideological issue. But these are the times we live in. The NEA and its think-alikes worry that giving in to phonics, associated as it is with conservatives, may send the whole system down the slippery slope where the school choice advocates lie in wait. The NEA should have thought of this before the public schools and their results rolled so far downhill. Now letting people choose schools offering competing methods of instruction is fast gaining public support, especially among minorities. So be it.

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cc:Mail for: mel krogseng

Subject: Part 1:Preventing Reading Difficulties in Young Children
From: family@ptialaska.net at CC2MHS1 3/18/98 7:06 PM
bcc: Mel Krogseng at LAA_STAY
To: family@ptialaska.net at CC2MHS1

Lets bring back the Committee substitute of SB 203. Lets beat the rest of the Nation and secure teacher training in research based reading from those who are up on this research.
Dr William Pfeifer

"THE MAJORITY OF READING PROBLEMS faced by today's adolescents & adults could have been avoided or resolved in the early years of childhood," according to a report released today by the National Research Council (NRC).

The report, "Preventing Reading Difficulties in Young Children," calls for widespread reforms "to ensure that all children are equipped with the skills & instruction they need to learn to read."

Responding to the report, Secretary Riley said that "The Council's findings send the nation's parents & educators a clear signal that we need to move beyond the contentious reading debate in some communities & focus on how children learn to read." The Secretary went on to say that...

"The study clearly defines the key elements all children need in order to become good readers. Specifically, kids need to learn letters & sounds & how to read for meaning. They also need opportunities to practice reading with many types of books. While some children need more intensive & systematic individualized instruction than others, all children need these 3 essential elements in order to read well & independently by the end of 3rd grade. Effective teaching & extra resources can make it possible for many 'at-risk' children to become successful readers."

An image version of the prepublication copy of the nearly 400-page report, is at:

<http://www.nap.edu/readingroom/enter2.cgi?030906418X.html>

The NRC press release is available at:

<http://www2.nas.edu/whatsnew/286a.html>

The Secretary's full statement will be available soon at:

<http://www.ed.gov/PressReleases/index.html>

Below is the first half of the executive summary of the report. The other half is in a second message, which you will also receive.

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Executive Summary of the Prepublication Copy of
"Preventing Reading Difficulties in Young Children."
Catherine E. Snow, M. Susan Burns & Peg Griffin, Editors.
Committee on the Prevention of Reading Difficulties in Young
Children, National Research Council.
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Executive Summary

Reading is essential to success in our society. The ability to read is highly valued & important for social & economic advancement. Of course, most children learn to read fairly well. In this report, we are most concerned with the large numbers of children in America whose educational careers are imperiled because they do not read well enough to ensure understanding & to meet the demands of an increasingly competitive economy. Current difficulties in reading largely originate from rising demands for literacy, not from declining absolute levels of literacy. In a technological society, the demands for higher literacy are ever

increasing, creating more grievous consequences for those who fall short.

The importance of this problem led the U.S. Department of Education & the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services to ask the National Academy of Sciences to establish a committee to examine the prevention of reading difficulties. Our committee was charged with conducting a study of the effectiveness of interventions for young children who are at risk of having problems learning to read. The goals of the project were three: (1) to comprehend a rich but diverse research base; (2) to translate the research findings into advice & guidance for parents, educators, publishers, & others involved in the care & instruction of the young; & (3) to convey this advice to the targeted audiences through a variety of publications, conferences, & other outreach activities.

The Committee's Approach

The committee reviewed research on normal reading development & instruction, on risk factors useful in identifying groups & individuals at risk of reading failure, & on prevention, intervention, & instructional approaches to ensuring optimal reading outcomes.

We found many informative literatures to draw on & have aimed in this report to weave together the insights of many research traditions into clear guidelines for helping children become successful readers. In doing so, we also considered the current state of affairs in education for teachers & others working with young children; policies of federal, state, & local governments impinging on young children's education; the pressures on publishers of curriculum materials, texts, & tests; programs addressed to parents & to community action; and media activities.

Our main emphasis has been on the development of reading & on factors that relate to reading outcomes. We conceptualized our task as cutting through the detail of mostly convergent, but sometimes discrepant, research findings to provide an integrated picture of how reading develops & how its development can be promoted.

Our recommendations extend to all children. Granted, we have focused our lens on children at risk for learning to read. But much of the instructional research we have reviewed encompasses, for a variety of reasons, populations of students with varying degrees of risk. Good instruction seems to transcend characterizations of children's vulnerability for failure; the same good early literacy environment & patterns of effective instruction are required for children who might fail for different reasons.

Does this mean that the identical mix of instructional materials & strategies will work for each & every child? Of course not. If we have learned anything from this effort, it is that effective teachers are able to craft a special mix of instructional ingredients for every child they work with. But it does mean that there is a common menu of materials, strategies, & environments from which effective teachers make choices. This in turn means that, as a society, our most important challenge is to make sure that our teachers have access to those tools & the knowledge required to use them well. In other words, there is

little evidence that children experiencing difficulties learning to read, even those with identifiable learning disabilities, need radically different sorts of supports than children at low risk, although they may need much more intensive support. Childhood environments that support early literacy development & excellent instruction are important for all children. Excellent instruction is the best intervention for children who demonstrate problems learning to read.

Conceptualizing Reading & Reading Instruction

Effective reading instruction is built on a foundation that recognizes that reading ability is determined by multiple factors: many factors that correlate with reading fail to explain it; many experiences contribute to reading development without being prerequisite to it; and although there are many prerequisites, none by itself is considered sufficient.

Adequate initial reading instruction requires that children:

- * use reading to obtain meaning from print,
- * have frequent & intensive opportunities to read,
- * are exposed to frequent, regular spelling-sound relationships,
- * learn about the nature of the alphabetic writing system, and
- * understand the structure of spoken words.

Adequate progress in learning to read English (or any alphabetic language) beyond the initial level depends on:

- * having a working understanding of how sounds are represented alphabetically,
- * sufficient practice in reading to achieve fluency with different kinds of texts,
- * sufficient background knowledge & vocabulary to render written texts meaningful & interesting,
- * control over procedures for monitoring comprehension & repairing misunderstandings, and
- * continued interest & motivation to read for a variety of purposes.

Reading skill is acquired in a relatively predictable way by children who have normal or above average language skills; have had experiences in early childhood that fostered motivation & provided exposure to literacy in use; get information about the nature of print through opportunities to learn letters & to recognize the internal structure of spoken words, as well as explanations about the contrasting nature of spoken & written language; and attend schools that provide effective reading instruction & opportunities to practice reading.

Disruption of any of these developments increases the possibility that reading will be delayed or impeded. The association of poor reading outcomes with poverty & minority status no doubt reflects

the accumulated effects of several of these risk factors, including lack of access to literacy-stimulating preschool experiences & to excellent, coherent reading instruction. In addition, a number of children without any obvious risk factors also develop reading difficulties. These children may require intensive efforts at intervention & extra help in reading & accommodations for their disability throughout their lives.

There are 3 potential stumbling blocks that are known to throw children off course on the journey to skilled reading. The first

obstacle, which arises at the outset of reading acquisition, is difficulty understanding & using the alphabetic principle--the idea that written spellings systematically represent spoken words. It is hard to comprehend connected text if word recognition is inaccurate or laborious. The second obstacle is a failure to transfer the comprehension skills of spoken language to reading & to acquire new strategies that may be specifically needed for reading. The third obstacle to reading will magnify the first two: the absence or loss of an initial motivation to read or failure to develop a mature appreciation of the rewards of reading.

As in every domain of learning, motivation is crucial. Although most children begin school with positive attitudes & expectations for success, by the end of the primary grades & increasingly thereafter, some children become disaffected. The majority of reading problems faced by today's adolescents & adults are the result of problems that might have been avoided or resolved in their early childhood years. It is imperative that steps be taken to ensure that children overcome these obstacles during the primary grades.

Reducing the number of children who enter school with inadequate literacy-related knowledge & skill is an important primary step toward preventing reading difficulties. Although not a panacea, this would serve to reduce considerably the magnitude of the problem currently facing schools. Children who are particularly likely to have difficulty with learning to read in the primary grades are those who begin school with less prior knowledge & skill in relevant domains, most notably, general verbal abilities, the ability to attend to the sounds of language as distinct from its meaning, familiarity with the basic purposes & mechanisms of reading, & letter knowledge. Children from poor neighborhoods, children with limited proficiency in English, children with hearing impairments, children with preschool language impairments, & children whose parents had difficulty learning to read are particularly at risk of arriving at school with weaknesses in these areas & hence of falling behind from the outset.

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(continued in message 2)

cc:Mail for: mel krogsgeng

Subject: Part 2: Preventing Reading Difficulties in Young Children
From: family@ptialaska.net at CC2MHS1 3/18/98 7:19 PM
bcc: Mel Krogsgeng at LAA_STAY
To: family@ptialaska.net at CC2MHS1

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Message 2, "Preventing Reading Difficulties in Young Children"
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Recommendations

The critical importance of providing excellent reading instruction to all children is at the heart of the committee's recommendations. Accordingly, our central recommendation characterizes the nature of good primary reading instruction. We also recognize that excellent instruction is most effective when children arrive in first grade motivated for literacy & with the necessary linguistic, cognitive, & early literacy skills. We therefore recommend attention to ensuring high-quality preschool & kindergarten environments as well. We acknowledge that excellent instruction in the primary grades & optimal environments in preschool & kindergarten require teachers who are well prepared, highly knowledgeable, & receiving ongoing support. Excellent instruction may be possible only if schools are organized in optimal ways; if facilities, curriculum materials, & support services function adequately; and if children's home languages are taken into account in designing instruction. We therefore make recommendations addressing these issues. (The complete text of all the committee's recommendations appears in Chapter 10.)

Literacy Instruction in 1st Through 3rd Grade

Given the centrality of excellent instruction to the prevention of reading difficulties, the committee strongly recommends attention in every primary grade classroom to the full array of early reading accomplishments: the alphabetic principle, reading sight words, reading words by mapping speech sounds to parts of words, achieving fluency, & comprehension. Getting started in alphabetic reading depends critically on mapping the letters & spellings of words onto the speech units that they represent; failure to master word recognition can impede text comprehension. Explicit instruction that directs children's attention to the sound structure of oral language & to the connections between speech sounds & spellings assists children who have not grasped the alphabetic principle or who do not apply it productively when they encounter unfamiliar printed words.

Comprehension difficulties can be prevented by actively building comprehension skills as well as linguistic & conceptual knowledge, beginning in the earliest grades. Comprehension can be enhanced through instruction focused on concept & vocabulary growth & background knowledge, instruction about the syntax & rhetorical structures of written language, & direct instruction about comprehension strategies such as summarizing, predicting, & monitoring. Comprehension also takes practice, which is gained by reading independently, by reading in pairs or groups, & by being read aloud to.

We recommend that 1st through 3rd grade curricula include the following components:

- * Beginning readers need explicit instruction & practice that lead to an appreciation that spoken words are made up of smaller units of sounds, familiarity with spelling-sound correspondences & common spelling conventions & their use in identifying printed words, "sight" recognition of frequent words, & independent reading, including reading aloud. Fluency should be promoted through practice with a wide variety of well-written & engaging texts at the child's own comfortable reading level.
- * Children who have started to read independently, typically 2nd graders & above, should be encouraged to sound out & confirm the identities of visually unfamiliar words they encounter in the course of reading meaningful texts, recognizing words primarily through attention to their letter-sound relationships. Although context & pictures can be used as a tool to monitor word recognition, children should not be taught to use them to substitute for information provided by the letters in the word.
- * Because the ability to obtain meaning from print depends so strongly on the development of word recognition accuracy & reading fluency, both of the latter should be regularly assessed in the classroom, permitting timely & effective instructional response when difficulty or delay is apparent.
- * Beginning in the earliest grades, instruction should promote comprehension by actively building linguistic & conceptual knowledge in a rich variety of domains, as well as through direct instruction about comprehension strategies such as summarizing the main idea, predicting events & outcomes of upcoming text, drawing inferences, & monitoring for coherence & misunderstandings. This instruction can take place while adults read to students or when students read themselves.
- * Once children learn some letters, they should be encouraged to write them, use them to begin writing words or parts of words, & use words to begin writing sentences. Instruction should be designed with the understanding that the use of invented spelling is not in conflict with teaching correct spelling. Beginning writing with invented spelling can be helpful for developing understanding of the identity & segmentation of speech sounds & sound-spelling relationships. Conventionally correct spelling should be developed through focused instruction & practice. Primary grade children should be expected to spell previously studied words & spelling patterns correctly in their final writing products. Writing should take place regularly & frequently to encourage children to become more comfortable & familiar with it.
- * Throughout the early grades, time, materials, & resources should be provided with 2 goals: (a) to support daily independent reading of texts selected to be of particular interest for the individual student, & beneath the individual student's frustration level, in order to consolidate the student's capacity for independent reading and (b) to support daily assisted or supported reading & rereading of texts that are slightly more difficult in

wording or in linguistic, rhetorical, or conceptual

structure in order to promote advances in the student's capabilities.

- * Throughout the early grades, schools should promote independent reading outside school by such means as daily at-home reading assignments & expectations, summer reading lists, encouraging parent involvement, and by working with community groups, including public librarians, who share this goal.

Promoting Literacy Development in Preschool & Kindergarten

It is clear from research that the process of learning to read is a lengthy one that begins very early in life. Given the importance identified in the research literature of starting school motivated to read & with the prerequisite language & early literacy skills, the committee recommends that all children, especially those at risk for reading difficulties, should have access to early childhood environments that promote language & literacy growth & that address a variety of skills that have been identified as predictors of later reading achievement.

Preschools & other group care settings for young children often provide relatively impoverished language & literacy environments, in particular those available to families with limited economic resources. As ever more young children are entering group care settings pursuant to expectations that their mothers will join the work force, it becomes critical that the preschool opportunities available to lower-income families be designed in ways that support language & literacy development.

Preschool programs, even those designed specifically as interventions for children at risk of reading difficulties, should be designed to provide optimal support for cognitive, language, & social development, within this broad focus, however, ample attention should be paid to skills that are known to predict future reading achievement, especially those for which a causal role has been demonstrated. Similarly, & for the same reasons, kindergarten instruction should be designed to stimulate verbal interaction, to enrich children's vocabularies, to encourage talk about books, to provide practice with the sound structure of words, to develop knowledge about print, including the production & recognition of letters, and to generate familiarity with the basic purposes & mechanisms of reading.

Children who will probably need additional support for early language & literacy development should receive it as early as possible. Pediatricians, social workers, speech-language therapists, & other preschool practitioners should receive research-based guidelines to assist them to be alert for signs that children are having difficulties acquiring early language & literacy skills. Parents, relatives, neighbors, & friends can also play a role in identifying children who need assistance. Through adult education programs, public service media, instructional videos provided by pediatricians, & other means, parents can be informed about what skills & knowledge children should be acquiring at young ages, and about what to do & where

to turn if there is concern that a child's development may be lagging behind in some respects.

Education & Professional Development for All Involved in Literacy Instruction

The critical importance of the teacher in the prevention of reading difficulties must be recognized, & efforts should be made to provide all teachers with adequate knowledge about reading &

the knowledge & skill to teach reading or its developmental precursors. It is imperative that teachers at all grade levels understand the course of literacy development & the role of instruction in optimizing literacy development.

Preschool teachers represent an important, & largely underutilized, resource in promoting literacy by supporting rich language & emergent literacy skills. Early childhood educators should not try to replicate the formal reading instruction provided in schools.

The preschool & primary school teacher's knowledge & experience, as well as the support provided to the teacher, are central to achieving the goal of primary prevention of reading difficulties. Each of these may vary according to where the teacher is in his or her professional development. A critical component in the preparation of pre-service teachers is supervised, relevant, clinical experience providing ongoing guidance & feedback, so they develop the ability to integrate & apply their knowledge in practice.

Teachers need to be knowledgeable about the research foundations of reading. Collaborative support by the teacher preparation institution & the field placement is essential. A critical component for novice teachers is the support of mentors who have demonstrated records of success in teaching reading.

Professional development should not be conceived as something that ends with graduation from a teacher preparation program, nor as something that happens primarily in graduate classrooms or even during in-service activities. Rather, ongoing support from colleagues & specialists, as well as regular opportunities for self-examination & reflection, are critical components of the career-long development of excellent teachers.

Teaching Reading to Speakers of Other Languages

Schools have the responsibility to accommodate the linguistic needs of students with limited proficiency in English. Precisely how to do this is difficult to prescribe, because students' abilities & needs vary greatly, as do the capacities of different communities to support their literacy development. The committee recommends the following guidelines for decision making:

- * If language minority children arrive at school with no proficiency in English but speaking a language for which there are instructional guides, learning materials, & locally available proficient teachers, then these children should be taught how to read in their native language while acquiring proficiency in spoken English, and then subsequently taught to extend their skills to reading in English.

- * If language minority children arrive at school with no proficiency in English but speak a language for which the above conditions cannot be met & for which there are insufficient numbers of children to justify the development of the local community to meet such conditions, the instructional priority should be to develop the children's proficiency in spoken English. Although print materials may be used to develop understanding of English speech sounds, vocabulary, & syntax, the postponement of formal reading instruction is appropriate until an adequate level of proficiency in spoken English has been achieved.

Ensuring Adequate Resources to Meet Children's Needs

To be effective, schools with large numbers of children at risk for reading difficulties need rich resources--manageable class size & student-teacher ratios, high-quality instructional materials in sufficient quantity, good school libraries, & pleasant physical environments. Achieving this may require extra resources for schools that serve a disproportionate number of high-risk children.

Even in schools in which a large percentage of the students are not achieving at a satisfactory level, a well-designed classroom reading program, delivered by an experienced & competent teacher, may be successful in bringing most students to grade level or above during the primary grades. However, achieving & sustaining radical gains is often difficult when improvements are introduced on a classroom by classroom basis. In a situation of school-wide poor performance, school restructuring should be considered as a vehicle for preventing reading difficulties. Ongoing professional development for teachers is typically a component of successful school restructuring efforts.

Addressing the Needs of Children With Persistent Reading Difficulties

Even with excellent instruction in the early grades, some children fail to make satisfactory progress in reading. Such children will require supplementary services, ideally from a reading specialist who provides individual or small-group intensive instruction that is coordinated with high-quality instruction from the classroom teacher. Children who are having difficulty learning to read do not, as a rule, require qualitatively different instruction from children who are "getting it." Instead, they more often need application of the same principles by someone who can apply them expertly to individual children who are having difficulty for one reason or another.

Schools that lack or have abandoned reading specialist positions need to reexamine their needs for specialists to ensure that well-trained staff are available for intervention with children & for ongoing support to classroom teachers. Reading specialists & other specialist roles need to be defined so that two-way communication is required between specialists & classroom teachers about the needs of all children at risk of & experiencing reading difficulties. Coordination is needed at the

instructional level so that intervention from specialists coordinates with & supports classroom instruction. Schools that have reading specialists as well as special educators need to coordinate the roles of these specialists. Schools need to ensure that all the specialists engaged in child study or individualized educational program (IEP) meetings for special education placement, early childhood intervention, out-of-classroom interventions, or in-classroom support are well informed about research in reading development & the prevention of reading difficulties.

Although volunteer tutors can provide valuable practice & motivational support for children learning to read, they should not be expected either to provide primary reading instruction or to instruct children with serious reading problems.

Conclusion

Most reading difficulties can be prevented. There is much work to be done, however, that requires the aggressive deployment of the information currently available, which is distilled in this report. In addition, many questions remain unanswered concerning reading development, some of which we address in our recommendations for research. While science continues to discover more about how children learn to read & how teachers & others can help them, the knowledge currently available can equip our society to promote higher levels of literacy for large numbers of American schoolchildren. The committee's hope is that the recommendations contained in this report will provide direction for the first important steps.

EDInfo

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Reading: State Policies re: Phonics/Whole Language

STATE POLICIES CONCERNING THE PHONICS/WHOLE LANGUAGE DILEMMA

ECS Information Clearinghouse

August 1997

Out of concern for students' perceived poor reading skills, lawmakers are examining the value of various methodologies of teaching reading, among them the phonetics-based and the "whole language" approaches. *Phonics* focuses on letter-sound relationships and the combination of different letter sounds. It teaches children to dissect unfamiliar words into parts and then blend the isolated sounds together to make a recognizable word. *Whole language* is based on the belief that children learn to read like they learn to talk by absorbing and imitating the language around them. It emphasizes reading for meaning and using literature rather than rules as a teaching tool.

Pros and Cons

The role of both phonics and whole language in reading instruction seems to cycle in and out of favor. Better word pronunciation and word recognition are credited as strengths of phonics-based reading programs. However, if children are taught with phonics alone, which intensely focuses on parts of words, some seem to have a difficult time understanding the whole meaning of a text. Whole language, on the other hand, incorporates and stresses the flow and rhythm of words and the meaning of a text. But some children who are taught with only a whole language method struggle with sounding out words. This is mostly because they do not grasp the concept of combining letter sounds to form words.

California adopted the whole-language approach for its statewide curriculum in 1987, then saw its reading assessment scores fall to tie with the lowest in the nation in 1994. Since then, state policymakers around the country have begun to reassess the comparative merits of the opposing methodologies. Consequently, some are supporting legislation to require phonics as a component of reading instruction, especially at the K-3 level.

So what is the best approach?

According to research, the best approach to teaching reading is a mixture -- a balance -- of both methods. Although the policies below reflect a push for phonics, keep in mind that a combination of phonics and whole language is important. Not all children learn in the same way, and good teachers successfully are able to use whatever balance works the best with each individual. The following, however, reflects actions to ensure the phonetic method does remain in the mix.

The following reflect state approaches regarding the use of phonics in the instruction of primary-level reading:

1. REQUIRE TEACHING OF ELEMENTARY READING BY PHONICS METHOD:

Alabama, California (grades 1-8), Delaware (for children reading, or at risk of reading, below grade level) Louisiana (for children with dyslexia or related disorders, as well as non-challenged children), New Mexico (grades 1 and 2), North Carolina, Ohio, and Oklahoma (in supplemental lessons for children reading below grade level)

Sample language, Alabama 16-6B-2(f): "The State Board of Education, on the recommendation of the State Superintendent of Education, shall prescribe the minimum contents of courses of study for all public

elementary and high schools in the state. In every elementary school there shall be taught at least reading **including phonics**, spelling, handwriting, arithmetic..."

CONSIDERING SUCH REQUIREMENT: (as of 8-97, all legislative bills had been referred to committee)
Alaska, New York, South Carolina

2. REQUIRE TEACHERS' CREDENTIALS TO INCLUDE STUDY OF PHONICS INSTRUCTION:
California, Mississippi, Ohio, Wisconsin

Sample language, California Education Code, 44259: "(b) The minimum requirements for the preliminary multiple or single subject teaching credential, are all of the following:...(4) Study of alternative methods of developing English skills, including the study of reading...among all pupils...The study of reading shall meet the following requirements: (A)(i): The study of organized, systematic, explicit skills including phonemic awareness, direct, systematic, **explicit phonics**, and decoding skills."

3. PROVIDE FUNDS FOR TRAINING IN PHONICS INSTRUCTION:

California (For teacher inservice; for the county office of education "to design a reading leadership program and develop materials that focus on systematically explicit phonics instruction" and other reading-related skills and disciplines; and for "reading leadership training programs" through the county office of education as well as school districts), Idaho, and Ohio ("state board shall provide in-service training programs for teachers")

Sample language, California Education Code 44757(b): "That funds received pursuant to this chapter shall be expended for inservice training programs in reading instruction that address systematically explicit phonics instruction, phonemic awareness, sound-symbol relationship, decoding..."

4. AUTHORIZE DISTRICTS TO APPLY TO STATE BOARD FOR FUNDING OF PURCHASE OF PHONICS-INCLUSIVE CORE READING PROGRAM MATERIALS:

California

Sample language, California Education Code 60352: "A school district may apply to the state board for funding for the purchase of a complete set of core reading program instructional materials pursuant to this article...(3) The instructional materials include, but are not necessarily limited to, phonemic awareness, systematic explicit phonics, and spelling patterns, accompanied by reading material that provides practice in the lesson being taught."

5. DESIGNATE FUNDING FOR SUPPLEMENTAL LESSONS STRESSING PHONICS FOR BELOW GRADE-LEVEL K-3 READERS:

Delaware

6. SET READING INSTRUCTION IN PHONICS OR WHOLE LANGUAGE AS DISTRICT OBJECTIVE RESULTING IN ADDITIONAL SALARY:

Iowa

Sample language, Iowa Code 294A.14: "For school districts, a performance-based pay plan may provide for additional salary for individual teachers, for teachers assigned to a specific discipline, or for all teachers assigned to an attendance center...the objectives may include, but are not limited to...accelerating the achievement growth of students enrolled in that attendance center through the use of learning techniques that may include, but are not limited to, reading instruction in **phonics or whole language techniques**."

7. CONDUCT A STUDY OF EFFECTIVE PRIMARY AND ELEMENTARY SCHOOL READING INSTRUCTION. INCLUDING PHONICS: Ohio

Sample language, 1995 Ohio HB 117: "A portion of the foregoing appropriation...shall be used by the Department of Education to conduct a study of effective primary and elementary reading instruction, including intensive, systematic phonics instruction...The study shall address at a minimum the following research questions: (2) In preparing teachers to teach reading, do Ohio colleges of education include how to teach phonics effectively?... (4) What part does phonics play in teaching children to read in schools that are effective in teaching reading to children with a variety of learning styles? (5) What is the impact of intensive, systematic phonics instruction on student achievement in reading and language arts?"

8. CONSIDERING REQUIRING TEACHER INSTRUCTION IN PHONICS TEACHING AND INSERVICE ON PHONICS INSTRUCTION: South Carolina

Note: We would like to identify states that are encouraging/mandating a combination of approaches. Please fax any state-level policies to ECS Information Clearinghouse, 303-296-8332

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COMMENTS

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The Role of PHONICS in Reading Instruction



ORDERING INFORMATION

The Role of Phonics in Reading Instruction position statement may be purchased from the International Reading Association at a cost of US\$5.00 per 10 copies plus \$3.00 shipping & handling, or at a cost of \$0.30 each for 100 or more copies plus \$3.00 shipping & handling.

Send orders to the Order Department at the address below or call 800-336-READ, ext. 266.

INTERNATIONAL

 **Reading
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A Position
Statement of the
International
Reading
Association

1. The teaching of phonics is an important aspect of beginning reading instruction.

This assertion represents a longstanding and widely shared view within the reading education community. The following statements from leaders in the field reveal the strength and history of this understanding.

"When the child has reached the maturity level at which he can make the best use of formal instruction in phonics, certainly no time should be lost in launching an extensive and carefully organized program to promote the wide and independent use of phonics in attacking new words, regardless of the grade or the time in the school year when this occurs."

Nila Banton Smith
IRA Founding Member

"Phonics instruction serves one purpose: to help readers figure out as quickly as possible the pronunciation of unknown words."

Dolores Durkin
Reading Hall of Fame Member

"Perhaps the most widely respected value of letter-sound instruction is that it provides students with a means of deciphering written words that are visually unfamiliar."

Marilyn Jager Adams
Author, *Beginning to Read:
Thinking and Learning About Print*

"Phonics is a tool needed by all readers and writers of alphabetically written languages such as English. While I am not a proponent of isolated drill, overreliance on worksheets, or rote memorization of phonic rules, I support the teaching of phonics that children actually need and use to identify words quickly and accurately. These strategies need to be taught systematically in well-planned lessons."

Richard T. Vacca
IRA President, 1996-1997

"Early, systematic, explicit phonics instruction is an essential part, but only part, of a balanced, comprehensive reading program. Phonics and other word-identification skills are tools that children need to read for information, for enjoyment, and for developing insights. The intensity and form of phonics instruction must be adjusted to the individual needs of children by a well-prepared teacher."

John J. Pikulski
IRA President, 1997-1998

We do not wish to suggest through these quotations that there is perfect harmony within the field regarding how phonics should be taught in a total reading program, rather that there is nearly unanimous regard for its importance.

A Professional Stance Toward Phonics

- The International Reading Association supports:
- research into effective phonics instruction and how this instruction supports the development of reading and writing abilities;
 - teacher education initiatives at the preservice and inservice levels that encourage broader use of best practices in the teaching of phonics;
 - parent education that is informative regarding the place of phonics within the total view of reading development and what parents can do to be supportive;
 - curriculum development that helps articulate the specific goals of phonics instruction within the context of a total reading program, as well as suggestions for tools and strategies for effective teaching; and,
 - authors and other artists who create the kind of engaging literature that provides the rich linguistic context for effective reading instruction.

The International Reading Association is concerned with:

- the exaggerated claims found in the press and other media regarding the inattention to phonics in beginning reading instruction;
- the growth in the number of curricular and legislative mandates that require teachers to blindly follow highly prescriptive plans for phonics instruction;
- the distortions in the professional literature surrounding the place of phonics instruction in a well-rounded, comprehensive reading program;
- the pitting of phonics against literature, as if the two are incompatible or at odds with each other; and,
- the inaccurate claims in the public media regarding the failure rates of students in learning to read that are attributed to the lack of phonics instruction.

Teachers *are* being successful in helping children learn to read. Every US study of reading achievement conducted over the past two decades has reported increasing numbers of primary-grade students performing successfully. A recent international comparison study (Binkley & Williams, 1996) has shown that in the area of reading, primary-aged students from the United States outperformed students from all other countries but one. Recognition for the tremendous advances that have been made by teachers in the teaching of reading is long overdue. We applaud teachers for the great strides they have made in improving the quality of reading instruction for all students.

We are not satisfied with the achievement levels reflected in the national assessments or the international comparisons. We will not be satisfied until we can claim success for all children. We have a long way to go and there is much to learn. However, exaggerated claims of the failure of students in learning to read

2. Classroom teachers in the primary grades do value and do teach phonics as part of their reading programs.

A recent national study (Baumann, Hoffman, Moon, & Duffy, 1996) of reading instruction in American public schools found that 98% of primary-grade teachers regard phonics instruction as a very important part of their reading program. Further, the study found that primary-grade teachers engage their students in phonics lessons on a regular basis as part of instruction in reading and writing.

Although there are many different types of or approaches to phonics instruction (e.g., intensive, explicit, synthetic, analytic, embedded), all phonics instruction focuses the learner's attention on the relationships between sounds and symbols as an important strategy for word recognition. Teaching phonics, like all teaching, involves making decisions about what is best for children. Rather than engage in debates about whether phonics should or should not be taught, effective teachers of reading and writing ask when, how, how much, and under what circumstances phonics should be taught. Programs that constrain teachers from using their professional judgment in making instructional decisions about what is best in phonics instruction for students simply get in the way of good teaching practices.

3. Phonics instruction, to be effective in promoting independence in reading, must be embedded in the context of a total reading/language arts program.

Reading is the complex process of understanding written texts. Children learn to read by using many sources of information such as their experiences, illustrations and print on the page, and knowledge of language—including their knowledge of sound-symbol correspondences. When teachers share interesting and informative books, nursery rhymes, songs, and poems with predictable language patterns, children develop and refine their use of these various information sources. Children become aware of and understand how print on a page relates to meaning. When children engage with texts themselves, as readers or writers, they begin to orchestrate this knowledge of how written language works to achieve success. It is within these kinds of contexts of language use that direct instruction in phonics takes on meaning for the learner. When phonics instruction is linked to children's genuine efforts to read and write, they are motivated to learn. When phonics instruction is linked to children's reading and writing, they are more likely to become strategic and independent in their use of phonics than when phonics instruction is drilled and practiced in isolation. Phonics knowledge is critical but not sufficient to support growing independence in reading.

learn, a however, exaggerated claims of the nature of students in learning to read serve only to divert our attention, energies, and resources from the important issues we must face. Explanations that focus on simple solutions, like more phonics instruction are misguided. The problems we face are complex and require inquiring minds.

Toward this end, the International Reading Association will continue to promote research and professional development activities focused on literacy. Through our research we will continue to study more effective ways of teaching reading, including phonics instruction, to achieve our common goal of literacy for all.

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Adopted by the Board of Directors Board of Directors at Time of Adoption

January 1997

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The best approaches for how to teach children to read and write have been debated throughout much of the 20th century. Today, the role of phonics in reading and writing has become as much a political issue as it has an educational one. Teachers and schools have become the focus of unprecedented public scrutiny as the controversy over phonics is played out in the media, state legislatures, school districts, and the home. In response to the many requests that have been received, the International Reading Association offers the following position statement regarding the role of phonics in a total reading program.

We begin with three assertions regarding phonics and the teaching of reading. We conclude with an expression of concerns for the current state of affairs and a call for professionalism.



TABLE 4-1

The Best Opportunities to Teach Phonics

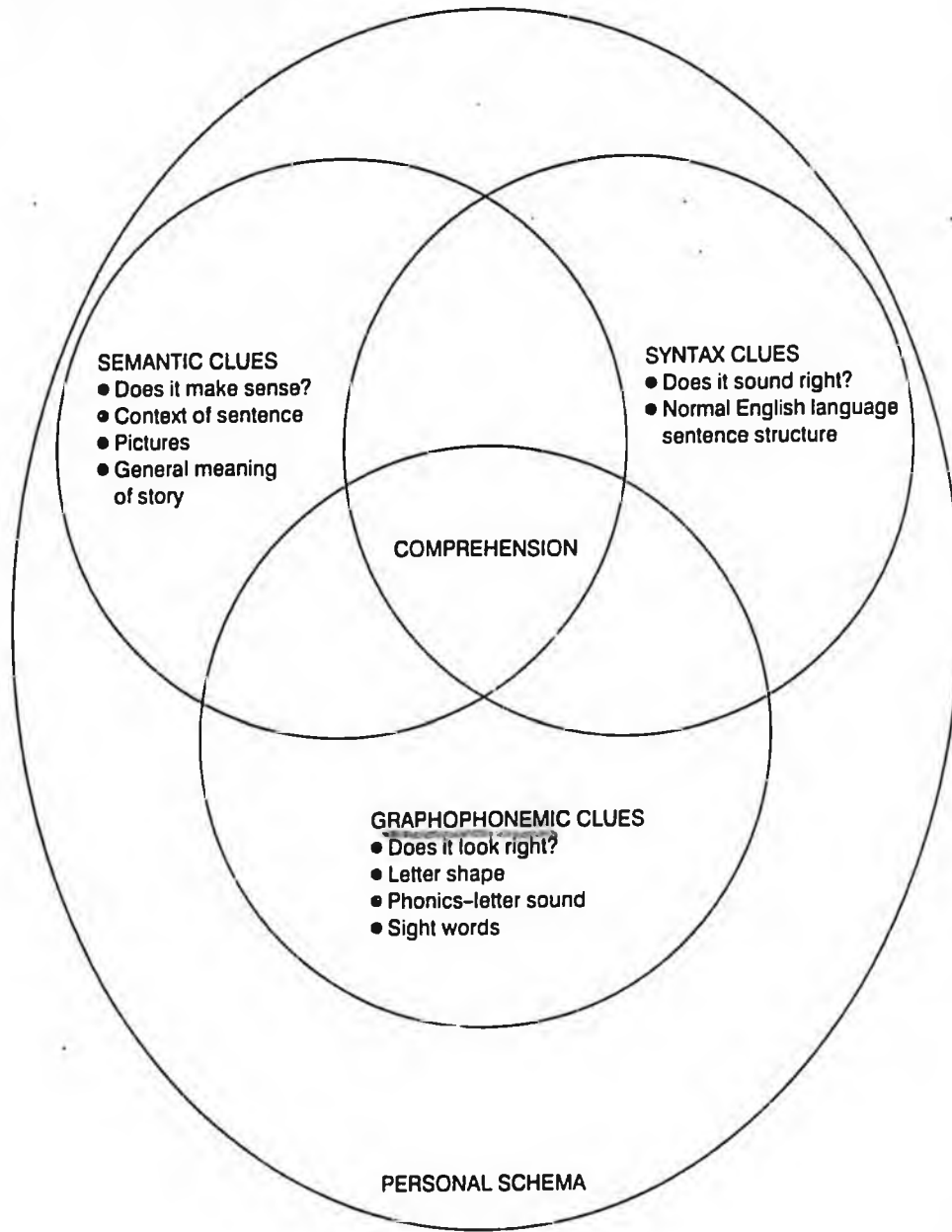
Teachers *help children to notice* general phonics principles during the following authentic literacy events:

- As children read and write memorized forms of words
 - their own names
 - their friends' names
 - important words such as "Mom," "Dad," "love," etc.
- As children match oral language to print
 - during dictation
 - in memorized reading of books, charts and functional print
 - as they read along with a tape-recorded story
- As children write with invented spelling
 - trying out their theories about phonics
 - constantly revising theories as a result of reading experiences

Teachers and other adults *tell* children useful phonics principles during the following authentic literacy events (limiting information to what a youngster appears ready to understand):

- As children dictate ideas and the teacher transcribes them
 - As children work at writing independently
 - During Shared Reading activities
 - As children work at reading independently
 - As children observe the teacher writing for adult purposes
-

FIGURE 4-4
Integrating Literacy Clues



Fields, M.V. & Spangler, K.L. (1995) *Let's Begin Reading Right*. Columbus, Ohio: Merrill Publishers.

The most common one taught >

even this is not much more than 1/2 useful.

Generalizations	Number of Words Conforming	Number of Exceptions	Percent Utility
1. When there are two vowels side by side, the long sound of the first one is heard and the second is usually silent.	309 (bead)†	377 (chief)†	45
2. When a vowel is in the middle of a one-syllable word, the vowel is short.	408	249	62
middle letter	191 (dress)	84 (scold)	69
one of the middle two letters in a word of four letters	191 (rest)	135 (told)	59
one vowel <i>within</i> a word of more than four letters	26 (splash)	30 (fight)	46
3. If the only vowel letter is at the end of a word, the letter usually stands for a long sound.	23 (he)	8 (to)	74
4. When there are two vowels, one of which is final <i>e</i> , the first vowel is long and the <i>e</i> is silent.	180 (bone)	108 (done)	63
* 5. The <i>r</i> gives the preceding vowel a sound that is neither long nor short.	484 (horn)	134 (wire)	78
6. The first vowel is usually long and the second silent in the diagraphs <i>ai</i> , <i>ea</i> , <i>oa</i> , and <i>ui</i> .	179	92	66
<i>ai</i>	43 (nail)	24 (said)	64
<i>ea</i>	101 (bead)	51 (head)	66
<i>oa</i>	34 (boat)	1 (cupboard)	97
<i>ui</i>	1 (suit)	16 (build)	6

*Generalizations marked with an asterisk were found "useful" according to the criteria.

†Words in parentheses are examples—either of words that conform or of exceptions, depending on the column.

SOURCE: Clymer, T. "The Utility of Phonic Generalizations in the Primary Grades." *The Reading Teacher* 16 (January 1963): 252-58.

FIGURE 5.4 The utility of forty-five phonics generalizations

Some Thoughts About Senate Bill 203
Susan Hanson, Coordinator
Alaska State Literacy Association

Bibliography

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The Role of Phonics in Reading Instruction, A Position Statement of the International Reading Association, Newark, Delaware, 1-800-336-Read.

CORRECTION

THE FOLLOWING DOCUMENT(S)
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Rev. 6/98

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Department of Education
State of Alaska

The most common one taught >

even this is not much more than 1/2 useful.

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FIGURE 5.4 The utility of forty-five phonics generalizations

Generalizations	Number of Words Conforming	Number of Exceptions	Percent Utility
7. In the phonogram <i>ie</i> , the <i>i</i> is silent and the <i>e</i> has a long sound.	8 (field)	39 (friend)	17
* 8. Words having double <i>e</i> usually have the long <i>e</i> sound.	85 (seem)	2 (been)	98
9. When words end with silent <i>e</i> , the preceding <i>a</i> or <i>i</i> is long.	164 (cake)	108 (have)	60
*10. In <i>ay</i> the <i>y</i> is silent and gives <i>a</i> its long sound.	36 (play)	10 (always)	78
11. When the letter <i>i</i> is followed by the letters <i>gh</i> , the <i>i</i> usually stands for its long sound and the <i>gh</i> is silent.	22 (high)	9 (neighbor)	71
12. When <i>a</i> follows <i>w</i> in a word, it usually has the sound <i>a</i> as in <i>was</i> .	15 (watch)	32 (swam)	32
13. When <i>e</i> is followed by <i>w</i> , the vowel sound is the same as represented by <i>oo</i> .	9 (blew)	17 (sew)	35
14. The two letters <i>ow</i> make the long <i>o</i> sound.	50 (own)	35 (down)	59
15. <i>W</i> is sometimes a vowel and follows the vowel digraph rule.	50 (crow)	75 (threw)	40
*16. When <i>y</i> is the final letter in a word, it usually has a vowel sound.	169 (dry)	32 (tray)	84
17. When <i>y</i> is used as a vowel in words, it sometimes has the sound of long <i>i</i> .	29 (fly)	170 (funny)	15
18. The letter <i>a</i> has the same sound (<i>ó</i>) when followed by <i>l</i> , <i>w</i> , and <i>u</i> .	61 (all)	65 (canal)	48

FIGURE 5.4 Continued

Some Thoughts About Senate Bill 203

Susan Hanson, Coordinator

Alaska State Literacy Association

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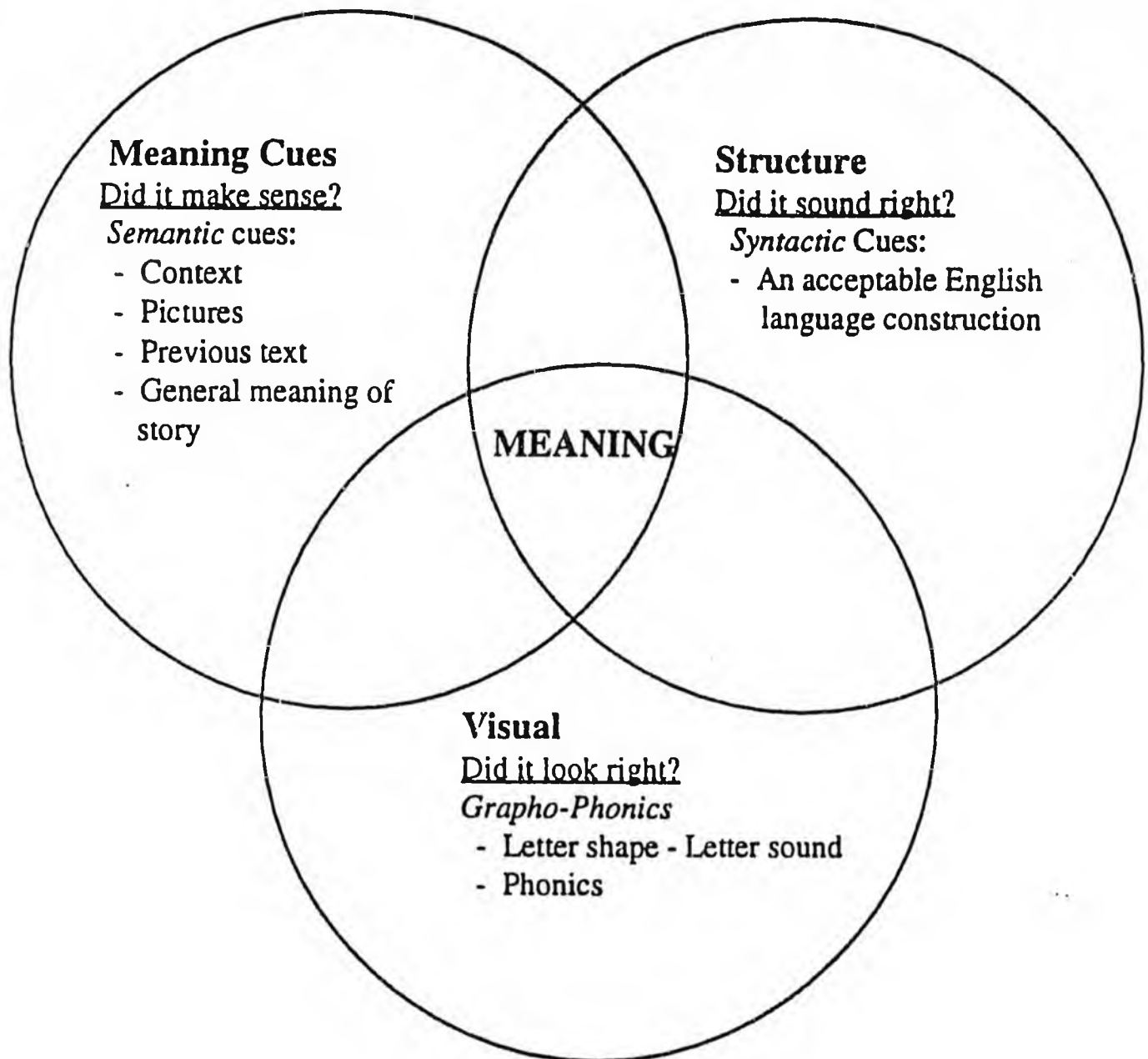
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The Role of Phonics in Reading Instruction, A Position Statement of the International Reading Association, Newark, Delaware, 1-800-336-Read.

The Three Cueing Systems



Factors Which Account for Reading Success and Failure

Successful Readers

- * Use a range of strategies
- * Attention is focused on meaning
- * Support meaning focus with letter-to-sound knowledge

Poor Readers

- * Have few resources to fall back on
- * Rely on memory
- * Pay no attention to print details
- * Disregard obvious discrepancies between what was read and what was on the page
- * Pay little attention to lack of meaning

EDUCATION WEEK

ion's Newspaper of Record

Volume XVII, Number 28 • March 25, 1998

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THE NATION

Literature by Quota?



nelso school board last week rejected a proposal that would have mandated using

racial quotas to select the authors on reading lists for the district's high school English courses. For this

NRC Panel Urges End to Reading Wars

Scholars Suggest Multiple Approaches

By Kathleen Kennedy Manzo

Let the wars be over. That is one of the central appeals the authors make in a long-awaited report on reading released in Washington last week.

Arguing that the complex process of learning to read cannot be tackled with single-minded methods of instruction, the report attempts to neutralize the phonics vs. whole language debate with a full range of recommendations for teaching reading to children from birth through the 3rd grade.

Instead, says the report sponsored by the National Research Council, the task must encompass an integration of the three techniques that develop phonemic awareness, reading fluency, and comprehension throughout early childhood.

"Because reading is such a complex and multifaceted activity, no single method is the answer," Catherine Snow, the chairwoman of the 17-member panel of scholars that wrote the report, said last week. "It is

Continued
p. 18

Panel Urges End to Reading Wars, Use of Many Approaches

Continued from Page 1

time for educators, parents, and everyone else concerned with children's education to make sure that children have all the experiences that research has shown to support reading development."

The problems many children encounter in learning to read—40 percent of the nation's 4th graders failed to reach the "basic" level on the 1994 National Assessment of Educational Progress in reading—could be prevented with excellent instruction and an early exposure to language skills and rich literature, says the report, "Preventing Reading Difficulties in Young Children."

The NRC, the research arm of the Washington-based National Academy of Sciences, took on the task at the behest of the U.S. departments of Education and Health and Human Services.

The panel, which studied a wide range of reading research over the past two years, called for an end to the reading wars that have divided educators, researchers, and lawmakers with opposing views of how children should be taught to read.

Despite the highly charged debate that has swirled around the issue for decades, the release of the 390-page report drew generally positive reactions from a variety of experts in the field.

"I was prepared to be once again

terrified by an inadequate, incomplete piece of misinformation," said Jim Hoffman, a professor of language and literacy studies at the University of Texas at Austin, referring to reports in recent years that prescribe one method of instruction over another. But Mr. Hoffman, who is a board member of the International Reading Association, a professional group of reading teachers based in Newark, Del., said he was pleasantly surprised by the in-depth review of the research that the panel conducted. "I think the recommendations are sound for research, teacher education, and the classroom."

Integrated Instruction

The report recommends that children learn to read through explicit phonics instruction and by sounding out unfamiliar words, but it also urges daily exposure to literature and attention to comprehension.

"Although context and pictures can be used as a tool to monitor word recognition, children should not be taught to use them to substitute for information provided by the letters in the word," the report says.

So-called invented spelling, which has often been the subject of ridicule by advocates of skill-and-drill techniques, also received the panel's endorsement. By this practice, children base the spelling of a word on the way it sounds.

Just as many states and districts turn toward skills-based instructional approaches in an effort to improve lagging reading scores, the report suggests such single-focus measures may be ineffective.

California lawmakers, for exam-

Reading Lessons

Following are two examples of what the National Research Council report characterizes as good reading instruction.

High-Quality Teaching: One Classroom

In Ms. Levine's 1st grade reading class, each student has a basket of books, chosen to match his or her ability. The bulletin boards offer children word-attack strategies. The children's journals are full of writing. The class has only 18 children, nine of whom have limited English ability and 12 of whom are living in poverty.

For 2½ hours, the children move at an upbeat and energized pace from one interesting and valuable activity to another. Every time the children start getting restless, it seems to be time to move to a new activity. The children are: reading independently, reading in pairs (shoulder to shoulder), reading in groups of four, spelling, and writing and writing some more.

While the children work individually or in groups by themselves, Ms. Levine teaches other children individually or in small groups. She then brings the whole class together to teach a phonics lesson on the ay sound in words like drawing. Without prompting, children clap out the sounds in the words. Next, she reads two books to her students, one fiction and one nonfiction, and talks with them about the content of those books. They review what helped them in understanding the book.

Word Wall and Making Words

In another 1st grade teacher's class, the daily two-hour language arts period is organized into four distinct half-hour instructional blocks devoted to process-writing instruction; basal-reading instruction; independent, free-choice reading of trade books; and word-study instruction.

The word-study block is the central focus of this discussion. It consists of two primary activities, word wall and making words. The word wall serves as a foundation for spelling instruction and practice, using five words selected each week from a basal-reading lesson or the children's writing. These words are posted and, as a whole group, the children practice reading and spelling them, with a daily chanting-clapping writing routine. New words are added weekly, and a subset is practiced daily.

Making words is part of the instruction in phonemic awareness, letter-sound relationships, and spelling patterns. For this activity, each child has a set of 26 letter cards, with corresponding uppercase and lowercase letters printed on either side (vowels in red, consonants in black). The teacher displays one or two vowels and three or more consonants to the whole class. After the children locate the same letters from their own collections, the teacher calls out a word for the children to make. A two-letter word is presented first, with succeeding words using more letters; 12 to 15 additional words are spelled daily in this manner and added to the display.

The highlight of this daily routine is the mystery word—one that requires the use of all the selected letters. The teacher does not identify this word; the children are encouraged to discover it on their own. Subsequently, the teacher and the children together explore the new words, sorting by various spelling or phonetic features, such as word families, rhymes, and common vowel and consonant combinations.

The making-words activity is an engaging medium for explicit instruction about specific spelling-sound correspondences and the alphabetic principle in general. It also provides opportunities for self-assessment and correction, as each new word is displayed and the children compare their spelling construction with that of the teacher. It supports children who are struggling to recognize letters automatically by limiting the number of letters encountered at once. Meanwhile, the physical manipulation of the letter cards accommodates children who might otherwise have difficulty sustaining their attention in whole-group instruction. Finally, the activity is inherently motivational, because children of all levels of achievement can experience both success and instructional challenge as the lessons proceed from simple to more complex.

BLOCK SCHEDULING

TEACHING IN THE BLOCK:

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"I was prepared to be once again

BLOCK SCHEDULING

TEACHING IN THE BLOCK: Strategies for Engaging Active Learners

Robert L. Canady & Michael Reilly
Describes alternatives to lecturing and traditional questioning to help teachers harness the potential of the extended period. 280 p. Hardcover. 1-883001-23-4. \$42.95.

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David Marshak

This book is for administrators and teachers who want to conduct action research, as well as those who want to skip the process and read the results of others. 250 p. Hardcover. 1-883001-40-4. \$39.95

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by the letters in the word," the report says.

So-called invented spelling, which has often been the subject of ridicule by advocates of skill-and-drill techniques, also received the panel's endorsement. By this practice, children base the spelling of a word on the way it sounds.

Just as many states and districts turn toward skills-based instructional approaches in an effort to improve lagging reading scores, the report suggests such single-focus measures may be ineffective.

California lawmakers, for example, have channeled millions of dollars into professional-development programs and textbooks that emphasize phonics in an attempt to counteract the state's decade-long emphasis on whole language. Though there are other elements to both, phonics essentially means the sounding out of letters and words, and whole language focuses on comprehension of the written word.

"If phonics means forgetting about the fact that the teaching is about reading, of course that is not prudent," Ms. Snow said in an interview. "There are three aspects of excellent reading instruction that need to be not just present but integrated."

Such instruction, however, can only be provided by teachers who are adequately prepared and well-versed in how children learn to read, the report says. It calls for a restructuring of teacher education programs, money for smaller class sizes, and high-quality instructional materials.

Marion Joseph, a member of the California state school board who has pushed for a greater emphasis on phonics instruction, said the panel's findings support the state's recent efforts.

"This is exactly according to our standards and the California approach," Ms. Joseph said. "We are very clear about the importance

of either side (vowels in red, consonants in black). The teacher displays one or two vowels and three or more consonants to the whole class. After the children locate the same letters from their own collections, the teacher calls out a word for the children to make. A two-letter word is presented first, with succeeding words using more letters; 12 to 15 additional words are spelled daily in this manner and added to the display.

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"Preventing Reading Difficulties in Young Children" is available by calling the National Research Council at (800) 621-6242. The cost is \$48.

SOURCE: National Research Council.

Draft - 2
Final in June

of skills, very clear about the importance of literature."

Early-Childhood Focus

To make early literacy efforts count, the panel suggests a greater emphasis on involving parents and improving the skills of child-care providers who work with children during the critical preschool years. "Primary prevention of reading difficulties during the preschool years involves ensuring that families and group-care settings for young children offer the experiences and support that make these language and literacy accomplishments possible," the report says.

U.S. Secretary of Education Richard W. Riley praised the report for its emphasis on children's early literacy experiences.

"This report confirms that to lay the foundation for reading successfully, families, caregivers, and early-childhood educators can help our youngest children develop strong language skills by talking to them, singing nursery rhymes, and reading to them beginning at birth," he said in a statement.

Rep. Bill Goodling, R-Pa., said the report supports the basis of the Reading Excellence Act, his

proposal to focus \$210 million on professional development for teachers as a way to improve children's reading achievement. The bill, which was passed by the House and is under consideration in the Senate, is the Republican response to President Clinton's America Reads initiative, which calls for an army of volunteers to help children learn to read.

"The National Research Council's new report on reading confirms that quality teaching from trained professionals—not untrained volunteers or tutors—is the single best defense against reading failure," Mr. Goodling, the chairman of the House Education and the Workforce Committee, said in a statement.

Bilingual Support

In a victory for bilingual education advocates, the panel recommends that young children be taught in their primary language if appropriate texts are available.

Despite the agreement the report has garnered among a number of experts in the field, it drew criticism from some who felt it emphasizes basic skills too much.

Although the report "represents an effort to achieve some kind of

consensus among divergent views on the committee," said Gerald S. Coles, an educational psychologist from Ithaca, N.Y., if read carefully "it's clear that what's actually recommended closely follows the stepwise model of people arguing for an emphasis first on skills."

But as the report begins to circulate among scholars and educators, Mr. Coles' view does not appear to be the dominant one.

"The fact that this report lists alongside of phonemic awareness the need for a focus on meaning and on fluency with a wide range of texts is a great step forward," said Bess Altwerger, an associate professor of elementary education at Towson State University outside Baltimore and a member of the commission on reading for the National Council of Teachers of English, an Urbana, Ill.-based professional association.

Others agree that the NRC report could have a positive effect on the field. "It is a well-constructed report that deserves careful attention," said Alan E. Farstrup, the International Reading Association's executive director. "Yet, it still places before us difficult questions that as a profession we have to address."

SB

237

SENATE COMMITTEE REFERRAL
First Committee of Referral

DATE: 1/14/98

FURTHER: Finance

Date of 5-Day Notice: _____
 (in accordance with Uniform Rule 23)

DATE TURNED
 IN TO OFFICE: 4/7/98

Health, Education and Social Services Committee considered

SENATE BILL NO. 237

"An Act extending the termination date of the Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault."

and recommends:

- be replaced with _____ CS SB 237 (HES)
- adopt previous _____ CS _____ (_____)
- attached amendment(s)
- adopt Letter of Intent by _____ Committee
- further referral to the _____ Committee

- Senate Bill:
- same title
 - new title
- House Bill:
- same title
 - technical title
 - new: SCR# _____

SIGNING/DO PASS	DP	OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS	NR	DNP	AM
<i>Kevin A. Scuman</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<i>J. Ellis</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
		<i>Lynne Green</i>			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
CHAIR: <i>Gary White</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	CHAIR:			

NEW FISCAL NOTE(S):

Department Date Zero Fiscal

Department	Date	Zero	Fiscal
<i>Public Safety</i>	<i>3/12/98</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	

PREVIOUS FISCAL NOTE(S):*

Department Date Zero Fiscal

Department	Date	Zero	Fiscal

APPROPRIATION -- no fiscal note

*include fiscal notes accompanying Governor's bill

SB+CS

0-LS1315E

Luckhaupt

3/5/98

CS FOR SENATE BILL NO. 237()

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

TWENTIETH LEGISLATURE - SECOND SESSION

BY

Offered:

Referred:

Sponsor(s): SENATE LABOR AND COMMERCE COMMITTEE

A BILL

FOR AN ACT ENTITLED

1 "An Act relating to domestic violence and sexual assault; amending Rule 404,
2 Alaska Rules of Evidence; and providing for an effective date."

3 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:

4 * Section 1. AS 12.55.101(a) is amended to read:

5 (a) Before granting probation to a person convicted of a crime involving
6 domestic violence, the court shall consider the safety and protection of the victim and
7 any member of the victim's family. If a person convicted of a crime involving
8 domestic violence is placed on probation, the court may order the conditions
9 authorized in AS 12.55.100 and AS 18.66.100(c)(1) - (7) and (11), and may

10 (1) require the defendant to participate in and complete to the
11 satisfaction of the court one or more programs for the rehabilitation of perpetrators of
12 domestic violence that meet the standards set by, and that are approved by, the
13 Department of Corrections under AS 44.28.020(b) [,] if the program is available in the
14 community where the defendant resides; the court may not order a defendant to

1 participate in or complete a program for the rehabilitation of perpetrators of
2 domestic violence that does not meet the standards set, and that is not approved.
3 by the Department of Corrections under AS 44.28.020(b);

4 (2) require the defendant to refrain from the consumption of alcohol;
5 and

6 (3) impose any other condition necessary to protect the victim and any
7 members of the victim's family, or to rehabilitate the defendant.

8 * Sec. 2. AS 18.66.100(c)(15) is amended to read:

9 (15) order the respondent, at the respondent's expense, to participate in
10 (A) a program for the rehabilitation of perpetrators of domestic violence that meets the
11 standards set by, and that is approved by, the Department of Corrections under
12 AS 44.28.020(b), or (B) treatment for the abuse of alcohol or controlled substances,
13 or (A) and (B) [BOTH]; a protective order under this section may not require a
14 respondent to participate in a program for the rehabilitation of perpetrators of
15 domestic violence unless the program meets the standards set by, and that is
16 approved by, the Department of Corrections under AS 44.28.020(b);

17 * Sec. 3. AS 33.16.150(f) is amended to read:

18 (f) In addition to other conditions of parole imposed under this section, the
19 board may impose as a condition of special medical, discretionary, or mandatory parole
20 for a prisoner serving a term for a crime involving domestic violence (1) any of the
21 terms of protective orders under AS 18.66.100(c)(1) - (7); (2) a requirement that, at
22 the prisoner's expense, the prisoner participate in and complete, to the satisfaction of
23 the board, a program for the rehabilitation of perpetrators of domestic violence that
24 meets the standards set by, and that is approved by, the department under
25 AS 44.28.020(b); and (3) any other condition necessary to rehabilitate the prisoner.
26 The board shall establish procedures for the exchange of information concerning the
27 parolee with the victim and for responding to reports of nonattendance or
28 noncompliance by the parolee with conditions imposed under this subsection. The
29 board may not under this subsection require a prisoner to participate in and
30 complete a program for the rehabilitation of perpetrators of domestic violence
31 unless the program meets the standards set by, and is approved by, the

1 department under AS 44.28.020(b).

2 * Sec. 4. AS 44.28.020(b) is amended to read:

3 (b) The department shall, with the approval of the Council on Domestic
4 Violence and Sexual Assault, adopt standards, by regulation, for rehabilitation
5 programs for perpetrators of domestic violence as defined in AS 18.66.990. For
6 purposes of AS 12.55.101, AS 18.66.100(c), and AS 33.16.150(f), the department shall
7 approve a program if the department determines that the [DETERMINE
8 WHETHER A] program meets the standards.

9 * Sec. 5. AS 44.66.010(a)(11) is amended to read:

10 (11) Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault (AS 18.66.010)

11 -- June 30, 2002 [1998];

12 * Sec. 6. Rule 404(b)(3), Alaska Rules of Evidence, is amended to read:

13 (3) In a prosecution for a crime of sexual assault in any degree,
14 evidence of other sexual assaults or attempted sexual assaults by the defendant
15 against the same or another person is admissible if the defendant relies on a
16 defense of consent. In a prosecution for a crime of [OR] attempt to commit sexual
17 assault in any degree, evidence of other sexual assaults or attempted sexual assaults
18 by the defendant against the same or another person is admissible [IF THE
19 DEFENDANT RELIES ON A DEFENSE OF CONSENT].

20 * Sec. 7. Rule 404(b)(4), Alaska Rules of Evidence, is amended to read:

21 (4) In a prosecution for a crime involving domestic violence or of
22 interfering with a report of a crime involving domestic violence, evidence of other acts
23 of [CRIMES INVOLVING] domestic violence by the defendant against the same or
24 another person or of interfering with a report of a crime involving domestic violence
25 is admissible. In this paragraph, "domestic violence" and "crime involving domestic
26 violence" have the meanings given in AS 18.66.990.

27 * Sec. 8. APPLICABILITY OF SECTIONS 6 AND 7. Sections 6 and 7 of this Act apply
28 to a criminal or juvenile proceeding held on or after the effective date of secs. 6 and 7,
29 regardless of whether the criminal offense or delinquent act occurred before, on, or after the
30 effective date of secs. 6 and 7.

31 * Sec. 9. Sections 1 - 3 of this Act take effect January 1, 1999.

1 * **Sec. 10.** Except for secs. 1 - 3 of this Act, this Act takes effect immediately under
2 AS 01.10.070(c).

FISCAL NOTE

STATE OF ALASKA
1998 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

BILL NO: SB 237

Revision Date: _____ Dept. Affected: Public Safety
 Title: Extend CDVSA BRU: CDVSA
 Sponsor: Labor and Commerce Component: CDVSA
 Requestor: (S) HESS COMPONENT SERIAL NO. _____

EXPENDITURES/REVENUES: (Thousands of Dollars) (inflation not included)

OPERATING	FY 99	FY 00	FY 01	FY 02	FY 03	FY 04
PERSONAL SERVICES						
TRAVEL						
CONTRACTUAL						
SUPPLIES						
EQUIPMENT						
LAND & STRUCTURES						
GRANTS, CLAIMS						
MISCELLANEOUS						
TOTAL OPERATING	0	0	0	0	0	0

CAPITAL EXPENDITURES						
----------------------	--	--	--	--	--	--

CHANGE IN REVENUES () Revenue Code	0	0	0	0	0	0
--	---	---	---	---	---	---

FUNDING: (Thousands of Dollars)

1002 Federal Receipts						
1003 GF Match						
1004 GF						
1005 GF/Program Receipts						
1006 GF/MHTIA						
Other						
TOTAL	0	0	0	0	0	0

Estimate of current year (FY 99) impact: \$ _____

POSITIONS:

FULL-TIME	0	0	0	0	0	0
PART-TIME	0	0	0	0	0	0
TEMPORARY	0	0	0	0	0	0

ANALYSIS: (Attach a separate page if necessary.)

This is sunset legislation that extends the Council through June 30, 2002. The Council's FY99 Budget is contained in the Governor's operating budget. It totals \$8,816.5.

Expenses:

Personal Services - \$374.1, Travel - \$223.8, Contractual - \$231.9, Supplies - \$9.2, Grants - \$7,977.5.

Revenue:

Federal Receipts - \$2,368.6, General Funds and PFD - \$4,769.0, Other - \$1,678.9.

Prepared By: Jayne E. Andreen
 Division: CDVSA

Phone: 465-4356

Date: 2/4/98

Approved by Commissioner: _____

Agency: _____

Ronald L. Otte, Dept. of Public Safety

Date: 2/5/98

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FISCAL NOTE

STATE OF ALASKA
1998 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

BILL NO: SB 237

Revision Date: _____ Dept. Affected: Public Safety
 Title: Extend CDVSA BRU: CDVSA
 Component: CDVSA
 Sponsor: Labor and Commerce
 Requestor: (S) HESS COMPONENT SERIAL NO. _____

EXPENDITURES/REVENUES: (Thousands of Dollars) (inflation not included)

OPERATING	FY 99	FY 00	FY 01	FY 02	FY 03	FY 04
PERSONAL SERVICES						
TRAVEL						
CONTRACTUAL						
SUPPLIES						
EQUIPMENT						
LAND & STRUCTURES						
GRANTS CLAIMS						
MISCELLANEOUS						
TOTAL OPERATING	0	0	0	0	0	0

CAPITAL EXPENDITURES						
-----------------------------	--	--	--	--	--	--

CHANGE IN REVENUES ()	0	0	0	0	0	0
Revenue Code						

FUNDING: (Thousands of Dollars)

1002 Federal Receipts						
1003 GF Match						
1004 GF						
1005 GF/Program Receipts						
1006 GF/MHTIA						
Other						
TOTAL	0	0	0	0	0	0

Estimate of current year (FY 99) impact: \$ _____

POSITIONS:

FULL-TIME	0	0	0	0	0	0
PART-TIME	0	0	0	0	0	0
TEMPORARY	0	0	0	0	0	0

ANALYSIS: (Attach a separate page if necessary.)


This is sunset legislation that extends the Council through June 30, 2002. The Council's FY99 Budget is contained in the Governor's operating budget. It totals \$8,816.5.

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Prepared By: Jayne E. Andreen Phone: 465-4356
 Division: CDVSA Date: 2/4/98
 Approved by Commissioner:  Date: 3/2/98
 Agency: Ronald L. Otte, Dept. of Public Safety

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Sectional Analysis
CS SB 237: Domestic Violence & Sexual Assault
(HESS)

Section 1:

Amends the Code of Criminal Procedure, Sentencing and Probation statute to ensure that if a defendant is to participate in a batterers' program, that program will meet the standards set by and the program approved by the Department of Corrections under AS 44.28.020(b).

Section 2:

Amends the Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault, Protective Orders statute to ensure that if a respondent is to participate in a batterers' program, that program will meet the standards set by and the program approved by the Department of Corrections under AS 44.28.020(b).

Section 3:

Amends the Parole Administration Act to ensure that if a prisoner is to participate in a batterers' program, that program will meet the standards set by and the program approved by the Department of Corrections under AS 44.28.020(b).

Section 4:

Amends the duties of the Department of Corrections to ensure that batterers' programs, that program will meet the standards set by and the program approved by the Department of Corrections under AS 44.28.020(b).

Section 5:

Extends the Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault by four years, the maximum extension allowed under AS 44.66.010(c).

Section 6:

Amends Rule 404(b)(3) to ensure that if a defendant relies on a defense of consent, evidence of other sexual assaults are admissible.

Section 7:

Amends Rule 404(b)(4) Rules of Evidence to make it clear to judges that there doesn't have to be a previous conviction, only that the acts were committed. This change allows the prosecution to produce evidence of previous acts of domestic violence.

Section 8:

The Court Rule changes apply only to proceedings held on or after the immediate effective date.

Section 9:

Court referrals, protective orders, and probation conditions that now must meet the standards and approved programs under AS 44.28.020(b) begin January 1, 1999.

Section 10:

Immediate effective date for the rest of the sections.

Alaska State Legislature



Senator Gary Wilken, Chairman
Senator Loren Leman, Vice Chairman
Senator Lyda Green
Senator Jerry Ward
Senator Johnny Ellis

State Capitol
Room 510
Juneau, Alaska 99801
(907) 465-3762

Senate Committee on Health, Education and Social Services

MEMORANDUM

TO: Senator Mike Miller
Alaska State Senate President

FROM: Senator Gary Wilken, Chairman
Senate HESS Committee

DATE: April 6, 1998

RE: SB 237 – Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault

I respectfully request that an additional referral to the Senate Judiciary Committee for SB 237, an Act relating to the Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault, be made.

This legislation passed from the Senate HESS Committee today as a committee substitute. The revised legislation is substantially different than the original bill and should be reviewed by the Senate Judiciary Committee.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

cc: Senator Robin Taylor, Chairman
Senate Judiciary Committee

Marcy Pilcher
8477 Thunder Mountain Road #81
Juneau, AK 99801
(907) 790-2385

February 23, 1998

Representative Bill Hudson
State Capitol, Room 108
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

Dear Representative Hudson,

I would like to voice my concern over the manner in which the State of Alaska is addressing domestic violence. According to the Domestic Violence Prevention and Victim Protection Act of 1996, if an offender does not reside in a community that has a standards approved program (Juneau or Anchorage) then the perpetrator cannot be ordered to complete counseling. There are many rural and urban areas that are currently ordering perpetrators to counseling in non-approved programs. Many of these communities can not afford to establish standards approved programs without some type of subsidy from the State. By not funding these programs what kind of message are we sending these communities? That their problems of domestic violence are less important than those of the two communities in Alaska who have standards approved perpetrator programs?

I agree that standards should be set for batterer's intervention programs. However, it is my opinion that the State of Alaska should be ashamed with the lack of support for offender programs! Alaska has the highest rate of domestic violence and sexual assault. Furthermore, we are doing very little to address the source of the problem. Most perpetrators of domestic violence are misdemeanants with very little jail time hanging over them. To a perpetrator who has spent a lifetime of learning unacceptable/violent behaviors, a few days in jail with NO counseling is NOT going to solve the problem of domestic violence.

One of the arguments for not funding perpetrator programs is that there is uncertainty to their effectiveness. If you had an ailment and 99% of the efforts made by your doctor were to address the symptoms and only 1% addressed the actual cause of the ailment, you might say that the doctors efforts are not effective. When in reality, if your doctor spent a greater percentage of effort addressing the cause of the ailment, the more effective he would be. If your doctor were providing you with similar "care," you would likely find another doctor. That analogy could be compared with the Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault's lack of support of perpetrator programs. Only one program was funded for FY98, at \$60,000. This is less than 1% of the Council's budget. Alaska Statute 18.66.010 mandates that the council provide services for families, victims, and, *perpetrators* of domestic violence. We need to find another system that will address our "ailment." In order to address the issue of domestic

violence you must begin with the perpetrator. I don't know why this seems to be such a difficult concept for some people to grasp. I implore you to set a course for change.

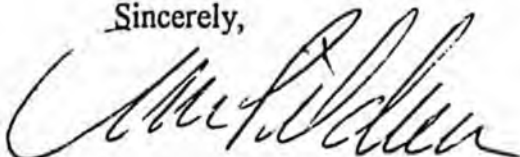
Providing shelter for a victim is a needed service. However, if we do nothing to address perpetrator's violence what are we saying? The old adage "Silence betokens consent" comes to mind. Perpetrators are not going to change their ways by their partner utilizing a shelter. Maybe a shelter will help a woman make positive changes in her life and she may eventually leave her partner. BUT when this man establishes another relationship he will continue his cycle of violence, hence creating another victim in need of services.

Changes that would positively impact the lives of all Alaskans affected by domestic violence (perpetrator or victim) would be:

- to remove responsibility from the Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault for funding, approving, and monitoring batterer's intervention programs. Batterer's programs should not be competing for the same resources as victim/survivor services.
- subsidize and develop programs across the state to research which methods of intervention work best with perpetrators in Alaska and then making an informed decision, create standards for batterer intervention programs. (See guidelines <http://www.umn.edu/mincava/papers/pwmmwb2.htm>) Utilize the experience and knowledge of the current perpetrator programs to create standards for Alaska.

If we can stop one perpetrator from abusing his partner, we may be saving three victims. If the State of Alaska does a better job in the prevention/intervention of domestic violence there will be fewer victims requiring services. Governor Knowles has indicated that the children of Alaska are in crisis. Part of the crisis facing children today is domestic violence. There are many studies that show that witnessing domestic violence has a detrimental effect on children. Boys who witness domestic violence are more likely to be perpetrators of domestic violence as they get older. Girls who witness domestic violence are more likely to become victims. This should not be a surprise to anyone. However what is surprising is the complete lack of effort on the behalf of the State of Alaska. **WE MUST STOP THE CYCLE OF VIOLENCE**, before it is repeated in our children, and their children, and so on.

Sincerely,



Marcy Pilcher

Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault
February, 1998

The Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault was established in 1981 to provide for planning and coordination of services to victims and perpetrators of domestic violence and sexual assault. The mission of the Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault is to provide immediate safety and support to victims of domestic violence, sexual assault and incest, and to reduce the incidence of these crimes in Alaska. Statutory duties of the Council include: funding and maintaining domestic violence and sexual assault programs; providing for planning of services to people who are affected by domestic violence and sexual assault; coordination of domestic violence and sexual assault services provided by State and local agencies; development and implementation of a standardized data collection system; providing fiscal and technical assistance to domestic violence and sexual assault programs; providing technical assistance and coordination with state agencies on training and policy development on domestic violence and sexual assault.

Alaska is a violent state, especially for women and children. We have consistently had one of the highest rates of sexual abuse per capita in the nation for the past decade, and the gap between the national average and Alaska is increasing. According to the Uniformed Crime Report for 1992, the Alaskan forcible rape rate is 96.4 per 100,000, which compares to 42.3 per 100,000 on the national level. Reported forcible rapes increased by 27% between 1994 and 1995, and represent 11.4% of Alaska's violent crime. In 1995, Alaska's reported forcible rape rate of adult women was 2.2 times the national average. Only 35.7% of the 516 reported sexual assaults resulted in some type of arrest or closure in 1995.

Child abuse is also a major problem in this state. The national reported incidence of child sexual abuse has more than tripled in the 1980's from 42,900 to 155,900 children. In Alaska, these reports have skyrocketed. From 1980 to 1990 the Division of Family and Youth Services' annual reports of suspected and adjudicated child sexual abuse rose from 185 to 2,039. Recent studies indicate that 38% of Alaskan children will experience sexual abuse in some form by the age of 18.

Domestic violence is inordinately high in Alaska. A statewide survey of Alaskan women (Stockholm and Helms, 1986) found: 10.2% (19,259 women) had been abused in an intimate relationship in the previous 12 months; 26% (49,091 women) had been abused by their spouses or live-in partners at some point in their adult lives. For most of these women the abuse occurred at least once a month. In 1985, at least 13,200 women in Alaska required medical treatment by a doctor or hospital for injuries sustained through abuse. Between 1991 and 1994, Alaska's Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System revealed that 13% of women who had recently given birth had been physically hurt by someone close to them before or during pregnancy.

The Council has four State members representing the Departments of Law, Education, Public Safety, and Health and Social Services. Additionally, there are three public members who bring their unique backgrounds and talents from diverse areas of the state. The makeup of the Council encourages coordination by combining the knowledge, experience and programmatic resources of its members so that issues of domestic violence and sexual assault can be addressed in a comprehensive and effective manner.

The Council funds community-based programs throughout the State that provide safety and support services to people whose lives are affected by domestic violence. In FY97, the Council funded twenty-one community-based programs who provide 250,000 safety and support services to more than 13,000 people. Victims and their children received approximately 49,000 nights of safety from the various safe home and shelter programs around the state. The urgent need for these services can be seen in the number of clients as well as the tremendous increase in demand for services. Since FY87, the number of people seeking services provided by Council-funded programs has increased by 8,300, a 47% increase.

With the designation of a separate grant line for community based batterers programs in FY98, the Council was able to fund one grant for \$60,000. Through a Reimbursable Services Agreement (RSA) with the Department of Corrections (DOC), the Council funds and monitors prison batterers' programs in Juneau, Fairbanks and Nome. The focus of these programs is to provide inmates in correctional facilities who have been perpetrators of domestic violence rehabilitative opportunities while incarcerated.

In addition to funding locally-based programs the Council provides a wide variety of services. These include:

- ◆ Statewide coordination of domestic violence and sexual assault activities
- ◆ Consultation with state and local agencies on the development of policy, procedures and training
- ◆ Facilitation of several federal grants that are providing resources to the criminal justice system's response to domestic violence, as well as child protection.
- ◆ Statewide planning for improving Alaska's domestic violence and sexual assault response.
- ◆ Technical Assistance at the state and local levels on domestic violence and sexual assault.
- ◆ Soliciting public input on domestic violence and sexual assault.
- ◆ Development of educational materials.
- ◆ Regulating locally-based victim and offender services to ensure quality service provision.
- ◆ Compilation of statewide data on domestic violence and sexual assault.

Provided by Jane Andreen, Executive Director
Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault



Bridget Crawford
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

222 Seward St. • Juneau, Alaska 99801

- Last session the Legislature created a \$60,000 batterers' intervention program component within the Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault (CDVSA) budget to ensure that money was designated for the prevention of domestic violence.
- There was over \$283,000 in funding requests from programs around the state.
- CDVSA chose not to increase the component for fiscal year 1999 thereby leaving communities unable to provide prevention and intervention services.
- Alaska Statute 18.66.010 states, "The purpose of the council is to provide for planning and coordination of services to victims of domestic violence or sexual assault or to their families and to perpetrators of domestic violence and sexual assault and to provide for crisis intervention and prevention programs" (emphasis ours).
- Alaska has one of the highest rates of domestic violence per capita. By funding only victim services we are operating in a crisis driven system and are not addressing the root of the problem. We cannot prevent future victims if we do not stop perpetrators from committing the violence.
- The Domestic Violence Act of 1996 states that the courts may order perpetrators to "state approved programs only."
- Tongass Community Counseling Center (TCCC) is one of only two "state approved" intervention programs for perpetrators of domestic violence.
- An investment of \$60,650 into programs now will save the community over \$500,000 in the future due to the increased severity and frequency of domestic violence offenses that will occur without intervention programs.
- Intervention programs hold perpetrators accountable for their acts of violence, provide techniques to learn to stop abusive behavior while monitoring compliance with conditions of probation.
- Our focus is on **victim safety**. We cannot prevent future victims if we do not stop perpetrators from committing the violence.

Alaska State Legislature

FEB 03 1998



H good

State Capitol
Juneau, AK 99801-1182
(907) 465-3720
(907) 465-2689

Official Business
Fax: (907) 465-3472

Speaker of the House of Representatives

DATE: February 2, 1998

TO: Ms. Jayne Andreen, Executive Director
Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault

FROM: SPEAKER GAIL PHILLIPS *Gail*

RE: Domestic Violence Program Priorities

If you will recall, last year several members of the House Majority sent you a memo emphasizing our position on funding for both community-based batterers' programs and provision of shelters for abused individuals. I have enclosed a copy of that memo as a reminder of the importance we place on this dual emphasis and to encourage a more substantial prevention effort by the council for FY 99.

It is my understanding that the need for the community based batterers' programs is substantial. Possibly as many as 25 programs may be needed to provide adequate coverage and cultural diversity. Also, there is a need to ensure that these programs are run in a manner to meet the state regulations – standards which, no doubt, will require a much larger investment of funds from the council. The \$60,000 allocated to the prevention program for FY 98 cannot begin to meet the need and to bring about any substantial reduction in the problem. Without a more substantial effort, I doubt that any impact on problem will be made.

If you have any questions regarding my position on this matter, I would be pleased to discuss them with you further.

GP:jmj

Enc.

Cc w enc: Commissioner Ron Otte
Deputy Commissioner Del Smith
Representatives Porter, Green, Hudson & James
Representative Gary Davis – Chair – subcommittee on Public Safety

Alaska State Legislature



State Capitol
Juneau AK
99801-1182

Official Business

MEMORANDUM

TO: Jayne Andreen, Executive Director
Council on Domestic Violence
and Sexual Assault

FROM: Rep. Gail Phillips, Speaker of the House *Gail*
Rep. Brian Porter, Majority Leader *B. Porter*
Rep. Joe Green, Judiciary Committee, Chair *Joe Green*
Rep. Bill Hudson, Resources Committee, Co-Chair *Bill Hudson*
Rep. Jeannette James, State Affairs Committee, Co-Chair *Jeannette James*

DATE: March 6, 1997

RE: Domestic Violence Program Priorities

It is our understanding that the Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault made the decision to discontinue funding for community based batterers programs, and to continue funding only the shelter programs. While we are supportive of the programs for victims, we feel it is also important for the perpetrators of these crimes to be treated to help reduce the numbers of women and children who become victims. To effectively address this issue, we need a two-fold approach including shelters and treatment for the perpetrators.

We are especially concerned because last year the legislature approved a budget increment of \$139,000 for your agency. During a year of deep cuts, we showed our support for the programs funded through The Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault by increasing your budget. There was a quote in the paper stating that if The Council just had the funding, these programs would be funded; when actually, we increased your funding to assure continuation of programs. We approved this increment because we felt that

Memorandum to Jayne Andreen

March 6, 1997

Page 2

continuing The Council was an effective approach in addressing the issue of domestic violence, a top priority for the House and Senate Majorities. Without funding batterers programs, we now have serious concerns about funding an agency that is only providing half of the services needed to combat domestic violence.

We strongly encourage you to specifically address this issue at your upcoming March 12th meeting, and amend your RFP to include funding community based batterers programs. The approach to domestic violence in Alaska cannot afford this one track approach. Please let us know the outcome of your March 12th meeting.

Thank you in advance for your consideration of our concerns. We look forward to working with you to help provide positive solutions toward addressing the very serious issue of domestic violence in Alaska.

cc: Ron Otte, Commissioner of Public Safety
Del Smith, Deputy Commissioner of Public Safety

Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault
Funding History FY94 - FY98

	FY 94 Actual	FY95 Actual	FY96 Actual	FY97 Auth	FY98 Gov Amend.
1002 Fed Receipts	506.6	529.7	737.7	1,348.0	2,808.6
1004 GF	4,866.2	4,807.6	4,586.3	4,752.3	4,932.1
1007 I/A Rcpts.	148.5	165.9	111.2	148.5	207.4
1050 PFD	750.0	840.0	1,215.0	1,076.5	1,396.5
TOTAL	6,271.3	6,343.2	6,650.2	7,325.3	9,344.6



1057 W. Fireweed Ln, Suite 230
Anchorage, Alaska 99503

Business 907/276-7279
24 Hour Crisis 907/276-7273
Toll Free 1-800-478-8999
Fax 907/276-9983
TTY 907/278-9988

January 29, 1998

Senator Gary Wilken
Room 510
State Capitol
Juneau, AK 99801

Dear Senator Wilken:

This letter is in request to schedule Senate Bill 237, An Act extending the termination date of the Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault for a hearing in the HESS committee.

STAR provides crucial crisis intervention to victims of sexual assault/abuse as well as to the families that are touched by this crime. We also provide safety education to school and community groups to raise awareness of the staggering rates of sexual assault in Alaska.

A majority of our staff positions at STAR rely heavily upon funding under the Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault (CDVSA). Without the CDVSA, STAR could not operate. These services are crucial to the healing process of victims and their families, in addition to educating the public about the local existence and severity of this problem. Please schedule this bill for the next possible HESS meeting.

Sincerely,

Trisha Gentle
Executive Director

Audit Report

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY
COUNCIL ON DOMESTIC VIOLENCE
AND SEXUAL ASSAULT

September 30, 1997



Audit Control Number:

12-1450-98

Division of Legislative Audit
P.O. Box 113300, Juneau, Alaska 99811-3300

LEGISLATIVE BUDGET AND AUDIT COMMITTEE

DIVISION OF LEGISLATIVE AUDIT

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The committee is responsible for providing the legislature with audits of state government agencies. The programs and activities of state government now cost more than \$5 billion a year. As legislators and administrators try increasingly to allocate state revenues effectively and make government work more efficiently, they need information to evaluate the work of governmental agencies. The audit work performed by the Division of Legislative Audit helps provide that information.

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ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

LEGISLATIVE BUDGET AND AUDIT COMMITTEE Division of Legislative Audit



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FAX (907) 465-2347
Internet e-mail address:
legaudit@legis.state.ak.us

September 30, 1997

Members of the Legislative Budget
and Audit Committee:

In accordance with the provisions of Title 24 of the Alaska Statutes, the attached report is submitted for your review.

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY COUNCIL ON DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND SEXUAL ASSAULT

September 30, 1997

Audit Control Number
12-1450-98

This audit evaluates whether the Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault should be extended in statute. Currently, under AS 44.66.010(a)(11), the council is scheduled to terminate on June 30, 1998. The council would have one year from that date to administratively conclude operations.

In our opinion, the Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault should be reestablished. The council serves a public need and is operating in the public's interest. We recommend that the legislature extend the council's termination date to June 30, 2002.

The audit was conducted in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards. Fieldwork procedures utilized in the course of developing the findings and discussion presented in this report are discussed in the Objectives, Scope, and Methodology section of this report.

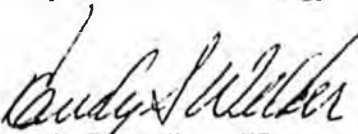

Randy S. Welker, CPA
Legislative Auditor

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OBJECTIVES, SCOPE, AND METHODOLOGY

In accordance with the intent of Titles 24 and 44 of the Alaska Statutes (sunset legislation), we have reviewed the activities of the Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault (CDVSA or council) to determine whether it was operating in the best interest of the public and if it should be statutorily continued in operation. As required by AS 44.66.050(a), the committee of reference shall consider this report during the legislative oversight process to determine whether the council should be reestablished. Currently, under AS 44.66.010(a)(11) the council will terminate on June 30, 1998, and will have one year from that date to conclude its affairs.

Objectives

There are two central, interrelated objectives of our report. They are:

1. To determine if the termination date of the council should be extended.
2. To determine if the council is operating in the public's interest. The assessment of the operations and performance of the council, was based on AS 44.66.050(c). This statute sets out criteria that is to be used in determining a demonstrated public need for the council.

Scope and Methodology

During the course of our examination, we reviewed and evaluated the following:

- Applicable statutes and regulations.
- Budget documents, session laws, and other legislative information relating to CDVSA's operations.
- The executive director's reading files.
- Interviews with various council members.
- Minutes of council meetings.
- Grantee performance and fiscal reviews prepared by CDVSA staff.
- Financial reports from the state accounting system.

- Interviews with individuals from other state and local community agencies with whom CDVSA staff and council members consult and coordinate.
- Minutes of interagency committees involved with domestic violence and sexual assault funding and issues.
- Documents prepared and reviewed for the FY 98 grant award council meeting.
- Interviews with CDVSA staff.
- Other documents related to CDVSA's operations and mission, as necessary.

During the course of our audit, we attended the meeting of the council where funds were allocated to grantees for FY 98. During this three-day meeting, we observed the proceedings of the council. This enabled us to see first hand how the council operates and interacts with its grantees and the public.

ORGANIZATION AND FUNCTION

The Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault (CDVSA or council) was established in the Department of Public Safety in 1981 by Alaska Statute 18.66. These statutes give CDVSA the authority ". . . to provide for planning and coordination of services to victims of domestic violence or sexual assault or to their families and to perpetrators of domestic violence and sexual assault and to provide for crisis intervention and prevention programs."

The council consists of seven members, of which four are the commissioners, or their designees, of the Departments of Public Safety, Health and Social Services, Education, and Law. The balance of the council is comprised of persons from the public appointed at the governor's discretion.

By statute, before making appointments, the governor receives recommendations from the Alaska Network on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault (a non-profit, private organization).¹ Council

members are not required to be selected from the Network's recommendations, although historically, with some exception, they typically have been.

The council is staffed by an executive director, a project coordinator, a statistical technician, and a secretary. CDVSA is authorized to receive and disperse both state and federal funds. Traditionally, a large part of CDVSA's responsibilities involves administering grants made to local community organizations for domestic violence, sexual assault, and crisis intervention and prevention programs. Grant administration includes providing technical assistance and monitoring the activities of the various grantees and contractors.

The community programs, funded by CDVSA, provide a variety of services to the public. Most importantly, their efforts are directed toward providing victims with a safe environment either through housing at a community shelter, or the use of a network of designated "safe houses." In addition, the programs are involved in educating and counseling the victim about domestic violence and sexual assault issues and providing batterers' intervention services.

Since FY 96, CDVSA's coordination role and responsibilities with other state and local agencies has grown significantly. Largely responsible for this increase is the increase in federal

Council Members as of July 31, 1997

Mary Pete. (Chair)	public member
Persenia Whittern	public member
Evie Smith	public member
Cindy Cooper	Law
Del Smith	Public Safety
Barbara Thompson	Education
Karen Perdue	Health and Social Services

¹ The Alaska Network on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault is comprised of 20 members, 19 of which are CDVSA-funded programs. The Network does annual training for members, acts as a legislative lobbying group, and sits as a non-voting member on several CDVSA committees.

funding and additional duties added by state law. The federal funds from the U.S. Department of Justice, Violence Against Women Act program, were initially awarded during FY 96. The purpose of these funds is to provide personnel, training, technical assistance, data collection and other equipment for the apprehension, prosecution, and adjudication of persons committing violent crimes against women. The statutory duties effective in FY 97 authorized consulting with other agencies regarding training and standards of care for responding to domestic violence and sexual assault. As a result, since FY 96, CDVSA has been expending greater efforts on the coordination of services provided by other state agencies. The other agencies involved are primarily the Department of Law, the Department of Public Safety, the Department of Health and Social Services, and the Alaska Court System, as well as local community agencies, such as victim services agencies and local police organizations.

REPORT CONCLUSIONS

Under AS 18.66, CDVSA is authorized to provide for the State's planning and coordination of the full range of services to victims, their families, and perpetrators of domestic violence and sexual assault. Combating domestic violence and sexual assault has become an increasing priority at both the state and national level. This increased priority is reflected by passage of the federal Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994, and the State's Domestic Violence Prevention and Victim Protection Act of 1996. Both of these legislative acts have focused attention and provided increased resources to develop and strengthen effective law enforcement and prosecution strategies aimed at combating these violent crimes. Further, this legislative effort has assisted in the development and strengthening of victim services in cases involving domestic violence and sexual assault.

These laws have placed increasing demands on CDVSA for coordination of state and community agencies to develop a comprehensive response to domestic violence and sexual assault. However this increased demand has stressed CDVSA's resources, and has resulted in deficiencies in some of the council's administrative functions (see Recommendation No. 1).

In our view, CDVSA is serving a public need and is operating in the public's interest. Currently, AS 44.66.010(a)(11) requires that CDVSA be terminated on June 30, 1998. We recommend the legislature extend CDVSA's termination date to June 30, 2002.

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FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation No. 1

The Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault's (CDVSA or council) executive director should continue to improve administrative procedures to adequately satisfy duties of the council.

Due to increasing responsibilities and a limited number of staff positions, CDVSA experienced deficiencies in carrying out its administrative and statutory responsibilities during FY 97. The lack of staff availability to carry out the full scope of the council's duties was further aggravated by staff turnover and extended illness of individuals that were on staff.

Data collected from grantees has not been processed since February 1997

Data related to services provided which CDVSA collects from grantees has not been entered into the council's database since February 1997. CDVSA typically monitors the monthly data reports from the grantees which enables staff to more quickly identify problem areas and changes in the needs of grantee organizations. This ability has diminished due to the weaknesses in the data collection system.² Further, the statistical analysis of the FY 96 grantee service data has not been completed.

Staff vacancy and the need to address other responsibilities have contributed to the current backlog in data analysis. The statistical technician position has been vacant since December 1996. CDVSA was able to employ temporary staff for a few months which allowed the entry of data received for services provided through February 1997, however, data collected for subsequent months is cumulating at CDVSA. While CDVSA has been attempting to resolve this situation, there have been difficulties finding someone to fill this position. CDVSA has just three other staff positions, and two of these individuals were recently hired. These staffing limitations and the magnitude of CDVSA's responsibilities made it impossible for CDVSA to adequately absorb the loss of the statistical technician.

In addition to the data backlog, staff vacancies have caused a slowdown of CDVSA's conversion to a fully-automated, standardized data collection process. CDVSA initiated a project to fully automate its data collection process in FY 96. The intent of the project is to provide each grantee providing victim services with a computer and a standardized format for recording service data. The content and format standards are being designed by a working committee of the council. The collected data will be transmitted to CDVSA electronically.

² Additionally as part of the sunset process, we typically provide appendixes with comparative services data. As a result of the lack of data, we are unable to do this.